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FRENCH PICTURES
AND THEIR PAINTERS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

PICTURES AND THEIR PAINTERS

AMERICAN PICTURES AND THEIR
PAINTERS

WHAT PICTURES TO SEE IN AMERICA

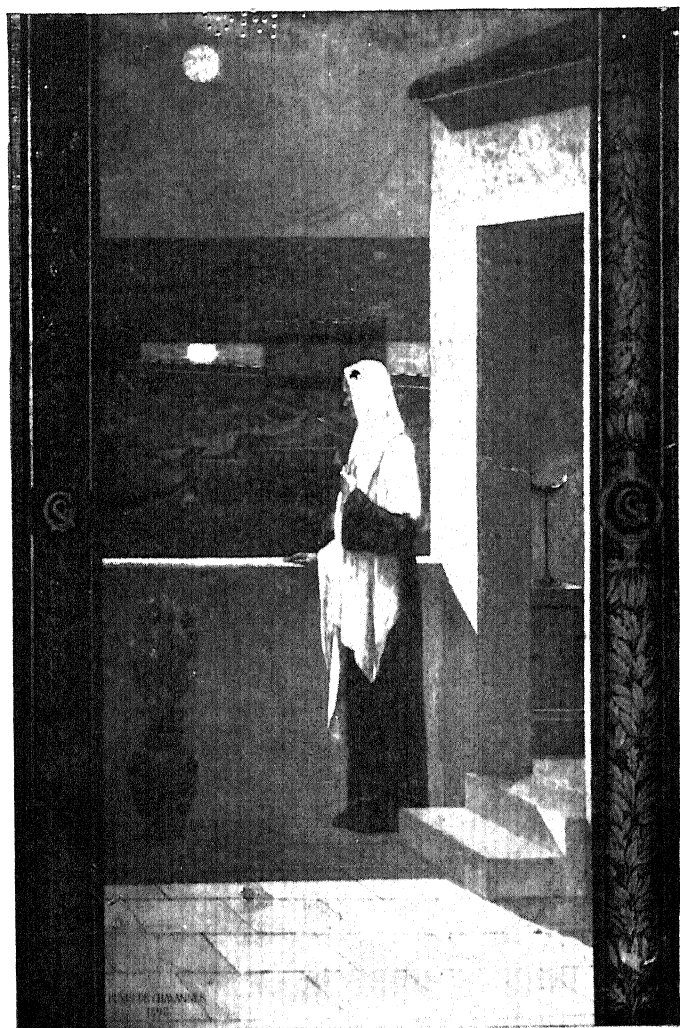
WHAT PICTURES TO SEE IN EUROPE

WHAT SCULPTURE TO SEE IN EUROPE

FAMOUS PICTURES OF REAL BOYS
AND GIRLS

FAMOUS PICTURES OF REAL ANI-
MALS

DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
NEW YORK

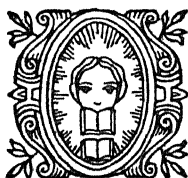


Frontispiece
Saint Genevieve Overlooking Paris. Puvis de Chavannes.
Pantheon, Paris.

FRENCH PICTURES AND THEIR PAINTERS

BY
LORINDA MUNSON BRYANT

ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK
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1922

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TO
MY COUSIN
ANTOINETTE BRYANT HERVEY

INTRODUCTION

Never has France been dearer to us than she is today. And never have we longed more deeply to know more about her people. Our boys and her boys lie side by side over there. The underlying cause that brought them together was the same, and very quickly they recognized in each other the spirit that was theirs in common. This spirit rose above the trench and the battle front and gave them, sometimes in pathos and sometimes in fun, pictures that appealed to each alike. And after all what goes deeper into our hearts than the pictures of a nation? Fortunately genius in any line of art is not circumscribed by a particular language, for it speaks a tongue of its own understandable to like geniuses among all people.

In "French Pictures and their Painters" I am bringing before you the men and women and children of France who have made history, and that means everybody in the French nation from the eleventh century until today, and also the painters who had the gift of portraying char-

FRENCH PICTURES

acteristics underlying the events which made or marred the welfare of the people.

We find that the artists of the various centuries were the real historians. Sometimes these artists were big enough to picture underlying motives that brought about a revolution or constructed a republic; then again the artists simply reflected the surface life of the time, but both have given invaluable material from which to construct a vivid word picture of each period of the time. The more familiar we can become with French pictures given us by painters who were living witnesses of the scenes, the closer we will come to that glorious nation whose people have indeed come up through tribulation.

As we proceed from century to century in studying the events and peoples portrayed by French painters, we find that we too become intimately associated with France. And to know France and her history through pictures is to know more about our own country and the men and women who brought it into being.

Then, too, in searching out the whereabouts of various artists' pictures we have come upon rare treasures in small collections in out-of-the-way places little known to the world.

Again in many a tiny village and hamlet, now so familiar to our boys who were in France, are

AND THEIR PAINTERS

certain old rustic houses beloved by the natives because a world artist had been born there and lived as one of them. I wonder how many American boys when in the Duchy of Lorraine hunted out in the tiny hamlet of Champagne the old home at the end of the street leading to a common pasture-ground and read from the tablet: "Here was born in 1600 Claude Gellée Lorraine, who died in Rome, November 25, 1682." And yet we cross the ocean to see Claude's pictures; and collectors pay tens of thousands of dollars to own one of his originals, for with him began the long list of French painters. The little Claude grasped in his tiny hands the national binding-cord that always has held France together and ever has helped her to consolidate her forces and constantly to draw other thinking peoples closer to each other. That national binding-cord is art—a reality founded on the laws of God.

L. M. B.

NEW YORK CITY.

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FRENCH PICTURES
AND THEIR PAINTERS

FRENCH PICTURES AND THEIR PAINTERS

CHAPTER I

QUEEN MATILDA—CLOUET—
POUSSIN—LORRAIN

PROBABLY in no country have artists been more intimately connected with the history of its people than in France. Not that France has always produced great masters in the arts but that her geniuses seem to have developed under some particular stress of the country, whether the stress was a revolution, a war, or a time of national stagnation. I think you will find this was specially true of the painters even when the pictures were made on linen with coloured wool.

The earliest piece of European art work of particular interest to France is the Bayeux Tapestry, in the Museum of the Public Library, Bayeux, France. It is really needlework instead of genuine tapestry. The history of its origin is still a question. The latest authority, I think, says that it was ordered by Bishop Odo,

brother of William the Conqueror, as an ornament for the nave of the Bayeux Cathedral and was worked by Norman craftsmen in that city. But why deprive Queen Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror, of the honour of having designed it, particularly as it was her husband whose exploits are so vividly represented on it.

Queen Matilda probably had no thought of indexing the character of French art. She was simply picturing events in the life of her conquering spouse, William I, and his treacherous opponent, Harold, and also keeping an eye on the decorative effect of the gaily coloured strip as it grew under the nimble fingers of herself and her maids. Yet the very same incentive that prompted Matilda to make both historical and decorative this famous work of art is a striking characteristic of French painters.

There was no more picturesque period in the dramatic history of France than when the Normans laid claim to England—and Matilda was quick to recognize the picture quality of the various scenes of the drama. She begins her story with Edward the Confessor, on the throne of West Saxony and, carrying it through successive scenes of intrigues, meetings, preparations for war and battles, ends the contest between Harold

and the Norman prince for the English throne by the flight of the English. William the Conqueror is crowned King of England in 1066.

So vivid are these pictures—usually separated from each other by a tree with a Latin inscription—that many of the costumes and customs, manners and mode of warfare, are easily recognized. In the scene of “The Battle of Hastings,” Hotel de Ville, Bayeux (Fig. 1), we note how true are Matilda’s perceptions of the horrors of the battlefield. Even to-day we shudder at the carnage of those primitive weapons of far off days. Her portrayal of the deeds of hatred perpetrated nearly a thousand years ago could well tell the same story today and possibly her simple crude style would be more effective than the pictures we have of war scenes. Then in the detail of “Harold Marches to War,” Hotel de Ville, Bayeux, France (Fig. 2), the aggressive spirit is wonderfully shown in each figure of the procession. Even the horses and dogs have the assertive air of would-be conquerors.

The pictures are embroidered on a strip of linen or canvas—over two hundred feet long and forty inches wide—in various colours of woollen thread. There are fifteen hundred figures—men, horses, dogs, buildings, ships, boats, trees, etc.—por-

trayed with such skill that we can trace certain customs and manners as well as the artistic development of the eleventh century.

Often the subjects chosen by early French painters for decorative purposes were religious though Christianity was not the motive power of the French as it was of the early Italian artist. Illuminated missals of rare beauty and exquisite workmanship are among the treasures of French art, also stained glass windows were made early in the thirteenth century.

Almost from the beginning French pictures showed the effect of the influence of invading nations on their painters. When Rome ruled France in the fifth century mural decorations followed Italian methods. Then in A. D. 800 Charlemagne brought in the Byzantine element; Irish decorations were introduced and Flemish influence was at work. There was no real French art before the fifteenth century and even then the methods were derived from other nations.

When Francis I (1494-1547) beautified and enlarged the buildings of Paris he not only encouraged home talent but invited the best artists of other countries to the French capital. Leonardo da Vinci and Andrea del Sarto came to assist in the decorating of the new palace at Fontainebleau. Naturally these masters influ-



FIG. 1.—Battle of Hastings (Tapestry detail). Matilda. Hôtel de Ville, Bayeux.



FIG. 2.—Harold Marches to War (Tapestry detail). Matilda. Hôtel de Ville, Bayeux.



FIG. 3.—Elizabeth of Austria. Clouet.
Louvre, Paris.

enced the native artists and even established a "Fontainebleau School." Many of the French painters, however, were being trained in the Flemish school and quite a strife grew up between the two methods—the Italian with its beautiful form and colour scheme and the Flemish with its love of detail and its sincerity and love of truth.

The native French artists who really attracted any attention in the fifteenth century were the Clouets and they were of Flemish origin. Two men of this family, Jean and François, were noted for their portraits. In them they showed the delicate finish of the Van Eycks, also the same transparency of colour and careful drawing. One of the most interesting portraits of François Clouet is that of "Elizabeth of Austria," in the Louvre, Paris (Fig. 3). This young woman, the daughter of Maximilian II of Austria, became the wife of Charles IX of France, in 1570, about the time this portrait was painted and two years before the horrible tragedy of St. Bartholomew. Little wonder that Clouet foreshadows in the sensitive young face a faint understanding of the terrible time in which she has found herself. She must have realized that the bitter strife between the Huguenots and the Catholics was a growing hatred, yet when the awful massacre

came not only France but the whole world was staggered at the crime.

For ten years the storm gathered; as early as 1562 the first blood drops fell; then in 1565, seemingly to add to the fury of the deluge, Charles IX and his mother, Catherine de' Medici, consulted the infamous Duke of Alba of Spain, as to the means of ridding France of the heretics. This drew forth the reply,

"Take the big fish and let the small fry go; one salmon is worth more than a thousand frogs."

A study of the faces of the Clouets' portraits reveals something of the passions that religious fanaticism develops. It is quite worth our study to pry into the motives that govern various phases of the world's history through the artist's interpretation of particular periods. Artists gain an insight into the workings of the human mind as expressed in the lineaments of the face and body that few laymen understand.

I think we are a little surprised when we begin to look into the art of a country to see how late the artist is in seeing pictures in the surrounding landscape. In fact some countries like Greece and Italy never developed a pure landscape art; and not until the nineteenth century was there anywhere in the western world a definite landscape school. It is interesting, however, to watch

the evolution of the pictorial value of trees and fields, valley and plains, clouds and running streams just for their own sake. This is particularly true with French pictures and their painters.

It is the seventeenth century before the art of France is strong enough to have its own school of sculpture and painting and even then most of the artists' work was done in Rome. This did not prevent their strongest men from expressing French traits in their works even if the method used was learned from the Italians. When such a painter as Nicolas Poussin (1593-1665), who was born in Andelys on the Seine, painted landscape settings for his classic scenes, the trees and grass and streams show the moist luxuriance of the deciduous trees and moss covered stones of France rather than the sun scorched hill-sides of the more tropical Rome of Italy.

Poussin was a student; he knew his Bible and his mythology. Legend and tradition were so familiar to him that when he painted "The Arcadian Shepherds," Royal Institute, Liverpool (Fig. 4), we feel that they might have stepped from Homer's galaxy of gods. These people bear no relationship to the Norman peasants neither are they playing at court life, yet a certain joyous lightheartedness keeps us mindful of the French national characteristic. As we study

the picture more closely we find the shepherds and the maiden are reading the inscription "Et Arcadia ego" on the old tombstone which they have found.

Poussin, though the founder of the classic and academic in French art, was too largely steeped in classic art to definitely establish a native school. Sir Joshua Reynolds expressed it in a nutshell, in discussing Poussin's love of ancient sculpture and the antique, when he wrote, "He may be said to have been better acquainted with them than with the people who were about him." We are glad that Louis XIII had the good sense to recognize the real worth of Poussin. But even the pension and a home in the Tuileries, given the artist on his return to France in 1639 at the invitation of the king, could not allay the jealous bickerings of his rivals in France, so in three years Poussin returned to Rome where he died at seventy-two.

In the Duchy of Lorraine only three miles north of Charmes—the little city so familiar to our soldier boys in 1918—in the tiny hamlet of Champagne is a tenderly cared for old house near the end of the street leading to the common pasture ground. This quaint old house attracts us not because it is picturesque but that on its front is a serpentine tablet inscribed with these words:—



FIG. 4.—Arcadian Shepherds. Poussin. Royal Museum, Liverpool, England.



FIG. 5.—Landscape. Lorrain. Louvre, Paris.

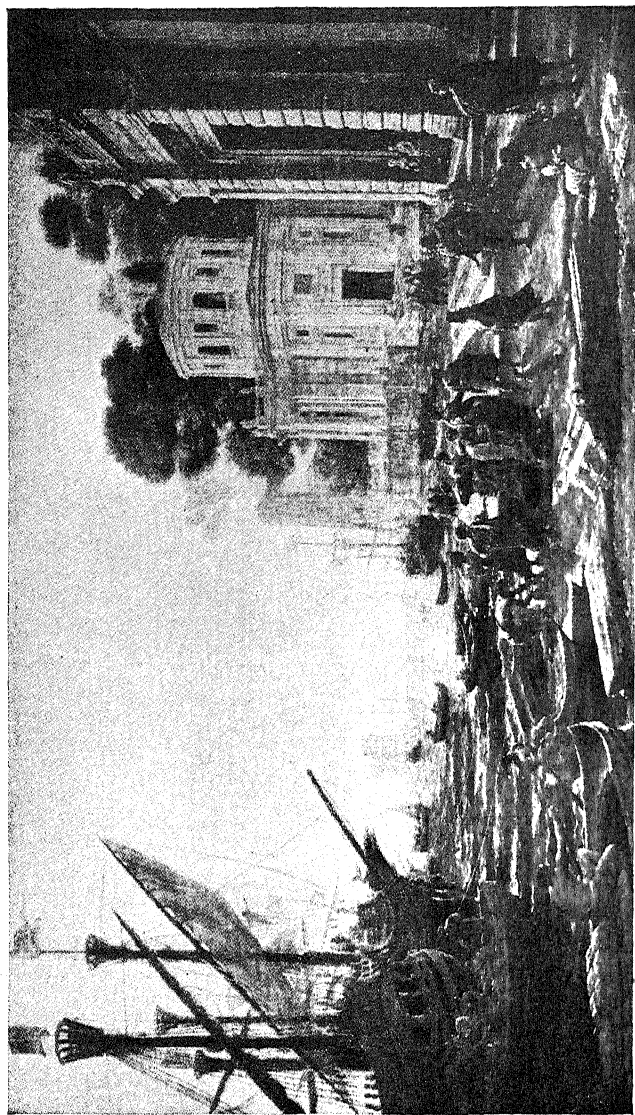


FIG. 6.—Landing of Cleopatra at Tarsus. Lorrain. National Gallery, London.

"Here was born in 1600 Claude Gellée, called Lorrain, who died at Rome, November 25, 1682."

He was a stupid boy, this Claude Gellée; so dull that his parents despaired of his even learning to bake a pie. An uncle advised, "If your child is good for nothing else he will be good for the church." Even this was beyond the stolid brain of Claude but to the good fortune of France he finally became the servant of a Flemish artist who took him to Rome—and then was born in this French peasant lad the true art of France! Little did the Flemish master's Italian friends dream that the dullard who cooked the meals and tended the table would outshine them all in their chosen profession, painting. It matters little whether Claude Lorrain was stupid and began his art career in Rome as a servant or, according to other authorities, that his relatives began early to have him trained for an artist with the usual ups and downs of bringing a hoped for genius in the family to world fame. We do know that today he stands as a master in painting.

As we look at the pictures of that wonderful trio of painters—Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorrain and the Italian, Salvator Rosa, we begin to realize that they are seeing nature with understanding eyes even in classic Rome. And of the three men Claude had the deeper vision.

Again and again we find ourselves lingering before some painting of his like the "Classic Landscape," in the National Gallery, London (Fig. 5), feeling instinctively his appeal to our very souls. He loved the classic but he loved nature better. Look at these trees at the right. How suggestive they are of the clumping together of trees near a body of water in a native grove. His loving sympathy allying him with nature's preferences is seen in the overhanging clouds peering at themselves in the placid water. Classic! of course it is in the dismantled tower and pillared shrine yet the people enjoying the cool shade and smiling lake could mingle with us and understand our daily problems.

Then, too, his classic knowledge was that of one who appreciated the master attainments of the past and realized their value in raising the tone of the present. In his art we feel indeed that "Men may rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things." As we look at the "Landing of Cleopatra at Tarsus," Louvre, Paris (Fig. 6), we can no more rid ourselves of the glorious history of the old city of Tarsus and the part Cleopatra and Paul played in it, than we can of the momentous events that were stirring the people under Cardinal Richelieu, Mazarin, and Madame Pompadour in Claude's own

day. Tarsus! how the very name stirs us. Hark! we can almost hear Paul say to the chief captain in Jerusalem, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a citizen of no mean city" (Acts 21: 39). This city of Tarsus, a seaport in the south east corner of Asia Minor, was a Greek colony as early as B. C. 2000, then the Assyrians and Persians laid claim to it, and in B. C. 334 Alexander came to the country. Pompey made Latin Celicia a Roman province and Anthony made Tarsus a free city about fifty years before Christ. Tarsus, combining as it did the luxuriance of the east and the enterprise of the west, formed a wonderful setting for the young and beautiful Cleopatra arriving in state. Claude portrays the royal galley with a true oriental spirit. The heavily laden boats are approaching the landing filled with treasures—gifts for the haughty, powerful, vacillating, ease-loving Mark Anthony. The meeting of these two in Tarsus—Cleopatra of Egypt and Mark Anthony of Rome—marked the retrogression that unfailingly follows the lapse of the West into the life of the luxury loving East.

There were three of the Le Nain brothers. Though born outside of Paris, at Laon, naturally they gravitated to that city as the centre of art life bringing with them, however, the healthy in-

fluence of Franz Hals. One of the brothers, Louis Le Nain, called the Roman (1593?-1648), was a man of the people reproducing with his brush the simple daily tasks of those around him. His paintings in the Louvre represent such humble scenes as "The Family of the Smith" where the man at the anvil turns expectantly to the door as if watching for a customer. Another interesting painting is a peasant family at their simple meal, and still another "The Return from the Fields"—all are portrayed so simply that they are quite modern in their realism. It after all is these natural artists of the people who pictured the simple things of life that from the beginning has coloured the whole art of France with delightfully national traits.

As we look at "The Mendicants," in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 7), we feel at once that Le Nain (possibly the work of all three brothers) has seen just such a scene many times. There is nothing unusual to attract our attention, in fact, it is the very usualness of the scene that holds us. We have passed these mendicants in Paris even today but Le Nain, and other artists like him, had to help us see them. See how graciously the gentleman, apparently in a hurry, stops to give to the beggar. Professionals? of course they are, and the man knows it too



FIG. 7.—The Mendicants. Le Nain. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

—yet who can resist a woman with a baby even though said baby is happy in being strapped to its mother's back? The archway is probably a meeting-place for mendicants in general as those with leisure and money often pass that way. Le Nain's colour note of yellow-brown, alive under the varying tints, perfectly fits the scene.

It is the genre artists of every age who, dealing with the fundamentals of living, give us the national characteristics of a nation. If it were not for these history-recorders of the simple things of life our knowledge of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia and other ancient peoples would be limited indeed. The very fact that they deal with the elemental, unchangeable needs of living creatures makes their work understandable in any age and enduring for all time.

CHAPTER II

LE SUEUR—LEBRUN—RIGAUD—
MIGNARD—CHAMPAIGNE

AFTER nearly two hundred years critics are still disagreeing as to the influence of Louis XIV (1638-1715) on the development of France. The famous Cardinal Mazarin, who was the real prime minister during the minority of Louis XIV, and who had known the young king from babyhood was probably correct in estimating his character when he said, "He has in him the making of four kings and one honest man."

Louis, the Great, a king at five years old, assumed full power at fourteen and for seventy-two years was absolute ruler of France. During the early years of his reign the country was weakened by a scheming court and harassed by wars with bordering peoples. But gradually Louis assumed all power until united the nation gained the respect of the French people and was feared by outside countries. He enlarged and beautified Paris, the capital of his beloved France,

organized and enriched her institutions and patronized her men of genius. Naturally when the king began to encourage native talent many writers, men of science and artists began to attract public attention. The Academy of Painting and Sculpture founded during the regency of Anne of Austria, the mother of Louis XIV, was enlarged and a French School created in Rome. Unfortunately few painters of real genius responded to the need of the hour—literature reached a height unknown in France before—but not so art. Poussin and Lorrain, living most of their time in Rome, were too engrossed in their own ideals to take up the bickerings that pertain to the workings of an Academy especially when the work must reflect suggestions of the dictators of the court.

There were a few artists in Paris at this time, however, big enough to hold their own ideals and who under more favorable circumstances might have risen to the rank of great masters. Among these was Eustache Le Sueur (1616-1655), who unfortunately died just as he reached his prime. Le Sueur was born in Paris. He had his early training in art under Simon Vouet. Later it was his good fortune to meet Poussin who had returned to Paris at the invitation of Louis XIII. A warm friendship grew up between the two and,

when Poussin was being persecuted by the petty jealousies of the other painters, Le Sueur was quick to defend the master. This friendship was invaluable to young Le Sueur. The lofty sentiments of the older man strengthened the young painter's earnest, sympathetic nature and widened his spiritual vision—a vision which later captivated the hearts of the people. Many of Le Sueur's pictures were of religious subjects and the lives of the saints. Most of them he painted for the Convent of Carthusians, where he died; and on the walls of many churches of Paris. His purity of style, sincerity in treatment and joyous delicacy of colour were in strong contrast to the pomposity of much of the art of the time.

In the Louvre we are attracted by his "Jesus and the Magdalene" (Fig. 8), because of the strong human element shown in the attitude of the Magdalene. A moment before she was filled with despair as she knelt before the empty tomb. The supposed gardener pronounced her name. She turns with outstretched arms to adore the crucified One. We seem to hear the beloved voice, saying, "Touch me not; I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and my God, and your God."

The arrangement of the picture is much like that of Titian and Correggio's but in it is a certain element of faith that is lacking in the Italian painters. True the artistic value of the picture does not equal those masterpieces of a hundred years before yet we recognize the childlike belief of Le Sueur and love his earnest striving to keep the truth before his pleasure loving companions. That he was called the "French Raphael" is evidence of his hold on the hearts of his brother workers.

Never in the history of art was there a more propitious time for painters to cover themselves with glory than under the rule of Louis XIV. Walls of numerous palaces were to be decorated; tapestries to be designed; public men and women ready to have their portraits painted and a king eager to foster the fine arts. But a walk through the palace of Versailles soon convinces one that favourable opportunities do not necessarily create master painters; in fact, it often hinders the development of true genius.

Charles Lebrun (1619-1690) was not a master. He was a courtier and knew how to play his cards well. His appointment as first painter to the king and director of the Gobelin Tapestry Works and of the Academy kept him in close touch with Louis XIV until the day of his death.

And what a position of power and influence for one man to hold—and that man not big enough for his job! If only Rubens could have been the man how magnificent would have been the art treasures bequeathed to the world.

Lebrun was original in composition but his fecundity in that direction was invariably to flatter the overweening vanity of the king. To be represented as an Alexander, and as a Caesar with the palm of victory in his hand was most pleasing to Louis and Lebrun found it the best means to further his own high standing at court.

Even Charles Lebrun's religious subjects are unique in selection. His "Christ in the Desert Waited on by Angels," in the Louvre (Fig. 9) is certainly a most unusual choice in Biblical story. It is strange that none of the great artists ever thought of selecting that verse: "And behold angels came and ministered unto him," for a picture. If Lebrun's conception could have been worked up with the magic of a master how different would have been the picture. To represent a figure balancing in mid-air with artistic effect requires more genius than Charles Lebrun possessed. The position of the angel is awkward and uncertain and even the wings are of little use either as assistance or ornament. Then, too,

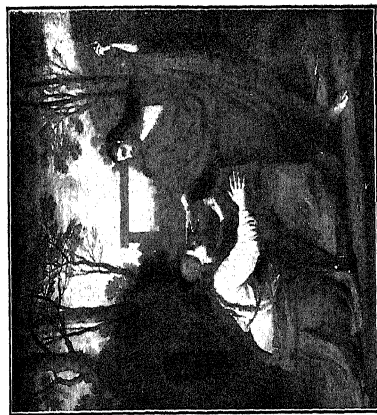


FIG. 8.—Jesus and the Magdalene. Le Sueur. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 9.—Christ in the Desert Waited on by Angels. Lebrun. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 10.—Portrait of Louis XIV. Rigaud. Palace at Versailles, France.

his handling of light and colour has little of merit to recommend it.

Lebrun was more fortunate in his designs for tapestry. The Gobelins, the well known works owned by the French Government, got its name some hundred years before Louis XIV's time. Jehan Gobelin, a Flemish dyer, came to Paris, and monopolized the dyeing business. He built a curious sort of unsightly building, later known as "Gobelin's Folly." In this building was established the manufacture of tapestries which became famous as "Gobelin Tapestry." Louis XIV in 1667 enlarged and reorganized the plant, made Lebrun the director, and ordered hangings for the remodeled palace of Versailles. Lebrun was in his element in making cartoons for tapestry workers.

The most famous of his patterns reproduced was, "The Battles of Alexander the Great." Of course typifying Louis XIV. It was entirely in keeping with Lebrun's policy that one cartoon should represent "Louis XIV Visiting the Gobelins." This tapestry is in the exhibition room of the Gobelins factory today. Naturally Lebrun represents the king in all the pomp and glory of a supreme monarch. No one catered more to Louis' excessive love of display than Le-

brun yet he always painted him a sovereign—after all is said Louis XIV was a King.

But not even Lebrun's portraits of the king has equalled Hyacinthe Rigaud's (1659-1743) portrayal of the grand monarch. This "Portrait of Louis XIV," Palace at Versailles, France (Fig. 10) will stand for all time as the epitome of a ruler who brought absolutism to its highest mark yet held the loyalty of his people. Rigaud understood what constituted good portraiture—his portraits of his mother prove that—but it is this portrait of Louis XIV that everybody remembers the artist by. Not that this portrait stands for great merit in portraiture but Rigaud was really big enough to rise above the demands of the vain ruler and paint a true likeness of him.

Pierre Mignard (1610-1695), nearly ten years older than Lebrun, lived five years longer—long enough to be appointed royal decorator. Louis XIV, like many another tyrant, became very religious near the close of his life. Under the influence of Madame de Maintenon, whom he had married in 1683, he became jesuitical in persecutions and then built churches and chapels as thank offerings. These were decorated by Mignard. In the church of Val de Grace is one of his frescos though not very well preserved.

Mignard spent most of his time in Rome but he

did leave some most valuable French portraits. In the Portrait Gallery, London, is his famous "Portrait of Louise de Keroual, Duchess of Portsmouth" (Fig. 11). Famous, possibly, because of the part Louise played during the Commonwealth when she was considered "a national nuisance," as mistress of Charles II, of England. Louise appeared in England as maid of honour to Henrietta, wife of the brother of Louis XIV and sister of Charles II. Although, in 1673 she was naturalized in England and created duchess of Portland and her son by Charles II was created duke of Richmond, she deserted the king in his time of need. She did, however, hang weeping over his dying form only to hear him whisper of another mistress, "Do not let poor Nellie starve." A portrait of Nell Gwyn, by Sir Peter Lely, hangs in the same room with this portrait of the Duchess of Portsmouth. After the death of Charles Louise returned to France and spent the remainder of her life in Aubigny, a fief granted her by Louis XIV.

Mignard's "Portrait of a Child" (Fig. 12) has a glimmer of real little girlhood in it. The prim precise pose of the little miss is delicious in its unconscious following of explicit directions. The child is entering into having her picture painted as part of her day's fun. She really could run

and play though Mignard had no idea of giving that impression. Even the bright eyed dog is waiting for the word "go!" Mignard has come near a genuine picture possibly because the child is waiting for a frolic with him as soon as the sitting is over.

Philippe de Champaigne (1602-1674) was born in Brussels but early in his art career he went to France. His portraits alone raised him to the rank of a master among the French artists. In them we learn the manner of men and women gathered at the court of Louis XIV. Unafraid he dared give in the likeness of his sitters what lay beneath the surface. He did, however, give in detail the fashion of ornaments, the exact cut of shoes, gloves and collar, the curl of the wig and the placing of the beauty spot, for such details were not trifles in the eyes of the public of that day.

While Champaigne's strength is in his portraits, yet when he combines his religious art with the former he really shows his best side. This is especially true in his "Portraits of Mother Catherine Agnes Armand and Sister Catherine of St. Susan," Louvre, Paris (Fig. 13). And when we recall that this picture is a thank-offering for the recovery of the artist's young daughter we begin to realize the spirit of prayer filled



FIG. 11.—Portrait of Duchess of Portsmouth. Mignard. Portrait Gallery, London.



FIG. 12.—Portrait of a Child. Mignard.

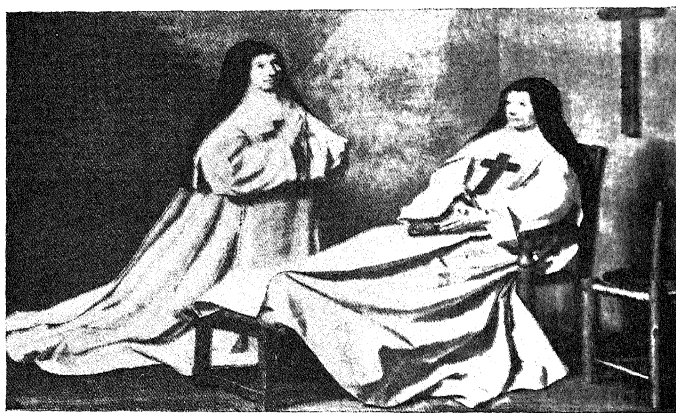


FIG. 13.—Portraits of Mother Catherine and Sister Catherine. Champaigne. Louvre, Paris.

with thanksgiving. The daughter sitting in the chair below the simple cross shows in her peaceful face and lightly folded hands the glad expression of one who feels the beautiful vigor of youth returning to her. In the Latin inscription above the mother superior Champagne has expressed his great gratitude for the recovery of his precious child. That these are portraits of people the artist knew, loved and respected is evident in every line of the work. They are likenesses that not only no friend would fail to recognize but they interpret to us the character of those women of two hundred years ago. It is not surprising that both France and Flanders wish to claim Champagne among their list of artists.

CHAPTER III

WATTEAU—NATTIER—CHARDIN

IT is hopeless to look for artists big enough to rise above the absolutism of Louis XIV. The whole court was one grand pose. Louis, absolute monarch at fourteen, enveloped in the robes and manners of the all powerful, succeeded in bringing France to a marvellous point of glory, yet in the end the frail human figure under those robes and manners failed to come up to true greatness, and poor France again declined. That the seventeenth century produced brilliant intellects none will deny. That great movement—the French Academy of Painting and Sculpture—started in the right direction to develop fundamentally an artistic nation. But when it comes to individual painters who could have stood shoulder to shoulder with the great Italians of Michael Angelo's time there were none.

The reign of Louis XIV stands as a peculiar example of strength and weakness in the history of the French nation. That the French nation had never before—and certainly not since—at-

tained so wide a material reach, or such heights of prosperity in material riches, or such lavish embellishment of Paris and its environs, no one can gainsay. But all these spectacular acquisitions which brought the nation to the crest of greatness could not hold it there for lack of adequate foundations. Possibly when Bolingbrooke wrote of Louis XIV, "If he was not the greatest king, he was the best actor of majesty, at least, that ever filled a throne," he put his finger on Louis' weakest point—an actor of majesty.

The artists of Louis XIV's time were either recorders of passing events or portrayers of individual men and women producing those events. But they were not masters either in historic subjects or in portraiture. For nearly a century there was not a painter in France who could keep alive the great art of the past or give to French art a national character. The eighteenth century marks another period in French history and French art. When Louis XIV died in 1715, the very absolutism which in his hands brought France to the height of her glory was the cause of her downfall. A reaction set in and an unprecedented reign of pleasure began.

Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) stood at the parting of the ways. Though really of Flemish origin, for his native city, Valenciennes, was in

Flanders until captured by the army of Louis XIV and assigned by treaty to France in 1678, he became so pronouncedly French that he stands as the first real exponent of French art. He saw little of the pomp and splendour of Louis XIV, for the real glory was rapidly giving place to a fantastic mood that deteriorated into simply playing at living. Watteau's life was really at variance to his art and his pictures are a constant surprise to us. Restless, irritable, unsatisfied and physically ill he continually changed his place of abode always wishing it was some other spot than he one he had chosen, yet the tranquillity that pervades his canvasses fill us with the joy of contentment. Not the slightest suggestion of world weariness creeps into his pictures. Could anything radiate the pure joy of living more than "Gilles," Louvre, Paris (Fig. 14)? He is every inch a fun maker. No wonder that when he appeared the audience was ready to shout with laughter. There he stands as much at ease as a child and with much the same look of wonder that comes to a child's face when he suddenly sees a crowd of people. Only Gilles will not cry out with fright, for in his eyes is a merry twinkle of understanding. When Watteau gave "Gilles" to the world he forever quieted the critic who asserted that his talent lay in little figures, for here



FIG. 14.—Gilles. Watteau. Louvre, Paris.

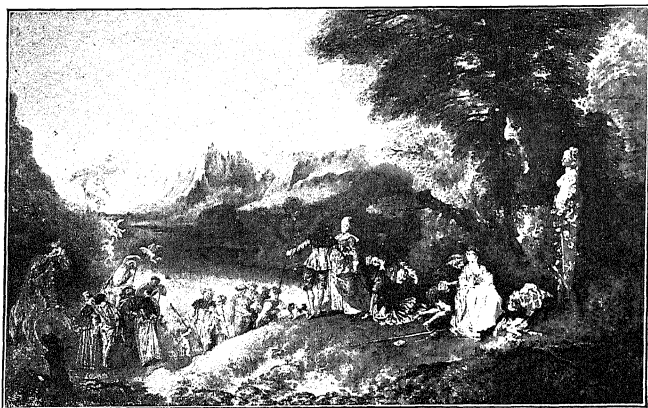


FIG. 15.—Embarcation for Cythère. Watteau. Louvre, Paris.

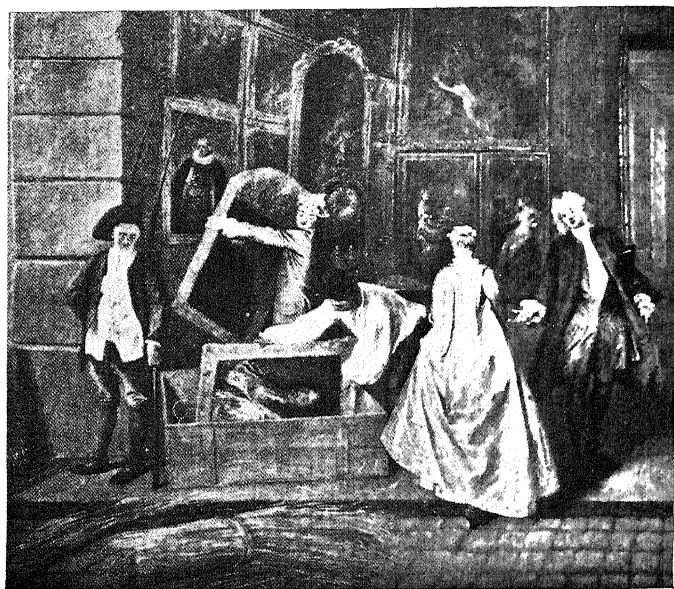


FIG. 16.—Gersaint's Sign Board. Watteau. Royal Palace, Berlin.

is a masterpiece in French art that belongs to the ages. See how the simple white costume sparkles and gleams in the quivering air. And how tantalizing the other figures appearing from below; and the doctor on the donkey at the left, what is it that so amuses him? The picture is full of the poetry of elusive light, of trembling shadows, of bewitching colour, yet it is the individuality of Gilles and his companions who fascinate us.

We realize as we look at Watteau's "Embarcation for Cythère," Louvre, Paris (Fig. 15), that the longed for glory of Louis XIV represented in the portrayal of great achievements, has given place to a scene of joy and happiness. There is no lack of dignity and decorum in this company gathering to take boat for the wonderful island, possibly Crete, where Aphrodite had her realm. The French people fairly caught their breath at the glory of the picture. Never had such splendour of colour, ease and grace of figures, delicate handling of flowers and foliage, and poetic quality of composition been seen in French art before. Watteau at once became the idol of art-loving Paris. He painted two pictures of this subject—the first, our illustration, gave him admission to the French Academy though it was scarcely more than a sketch. The

picture has the undefinable radiance of an inspired impulse—a rare moment even in a true genius.

The French picture dealer, Edme-François Gersaint, a very close friend of Watteau, tells a curious tale about the artist painting "Gersaint's Sign Board," Royal Palace, Berlin (Fig. 16). He says that Watteau came to him one day in 1721, and asked if he might paint him a sign board "in order to limber up his fingers." Gersaint thought it a waste of Watteau's precious time but gave his consent. The signboard, now in two parts, was painted direct from actual scenes and so wonderfully true to life that not only the people but the artists from far and near came to see it. Watteau did the work in eight days painting only in the mornings. Gersaint says that the artist confessed, "It is the only one of his works that in any way aroused his self-conceit."

Playing at living that characterized the eighteenth century in France naturally lowered the moral and intellectual tone of the people and any artist of this century who could picture the tendency of the times, as Watteau did, without becoming petty and insignificant in his art was certainly a master. He never erred in giving charm to his compositions and his keen apprecia-

tion of the decorative effect of delicately elusive colour is perfect, while his bolder hues give permanence to his pictures. It would scarcely be possible to form a just judgment of the reign of Louis XV without Watteau's pictures. Young as the artist was, he died at thirty-seven, he understood the canker that was sapping the virility of France. But with an artist's instinct he masked the creeping paralysis under exquisite gowns and elaborate coiffeurs, decorated with finest laces and sparkling jewels. So bewitching were the styles of his flowing folds that the "Watteau Pleat" became the fashion of his day—a fashion many times in vogue since then.

Jean-Marc Nattier was born in Paris in 1685, a year later than Watteau, and lived for eighty-one years (died 1766). He saw the absolutism established by Louis XIV become in the weak hands of Louis XV and his advisors the ruin of France. What a pity that Nattier with this wonderful opportunity to read the signs of the times in the faces of his numberless royal and noble sitters, saw nothing below the surface. If only he had had the penetrating insight that Watteau showed in his interpretation of the times, his galaxy of French portraits would be invaluable as a biographical history.

Both Nattier's parents were artists and from

early childhood Jean-Marc made wonderful copies of the old masters' works. He copied Rigaud's portrait of Louis XIV (see Fig. 10) with such skill that it was shown to the monarch who remarked to the child, "Monsieur, continue to work thus and you will become a great man." The architect, Mansart, of Mansart roof renown, was so pleased with the boy-artist's copies of Lebrun's battlepieces that he gave him a small allowance from the Academy benefit-fund for deserving people. However, neither the precociousness of youth nor the patronage of the great could make Nattier a great artist. No one will deny that Nattier was a genius in painting faithful likenesses of royal princesses and court favourites and yet always making them beautiful. Just what he did to transform ugliness of face and form into comely likenesses on canvas was the artist's own secret. Naturally Nattier was the idol of the hour. Every beauty and would-be beauty wanted her portrait painted—he rarely painted until he was fairly swamped with commissions. His portraits of Louis XV's family, a wife and ten children—eight of them daughters—alone testify to his marvellous industry. And the portraits of the queen are the most perfect examples of his ability to flatter truthfully.

As we look at the "Portrait of Marie Lecz-



FIG. 17.—Portrait of Queen Leczinska. Nattier. Palace of Versailles,
France.



FIG. 18.—The Magdalene. Nattier.
Louvre, Paris.

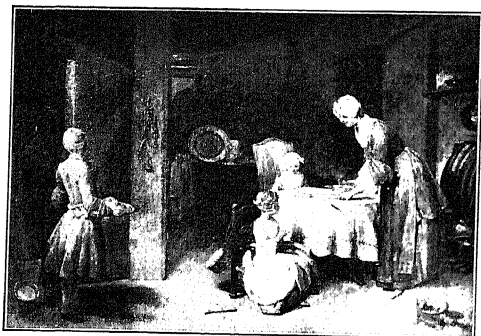


FIG. 19.—The Blessing. Chardin. Louvre,
Paris.

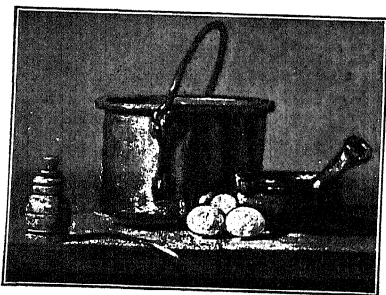


FIG. 20.—Still Life. Chardin. Louvre,
Paris.

niska, Queen of France," Versailles, France (Fig. 17), we are convinced that something more than skill in laying on pigment belonged to Nattier. However much we admire her exemplary conduct amid the flimsy, immoral, unstable life of the degenerate court we know that she was not brilliant of mind nor beautiful in person. Her marriage to the beautiful young king, then fifteen while she was twenty-two, was one of convenience. That no word of scandal ever touched her in the great Palace of Versailles may have inspired Nattier with the motif in her personality most charming to us. The queen was fifty-five (1748) when this portrait was exhibited. Her robe of red velvet trimmed with dark fur and the filmy lace cap, neck piece and sleeves set against the soft green curtain, give even greater brilliancy to her lovely pink and white skin. No wonder that the people loved this gentle woman. Those tender eyes and smiling lips were never harsh in judgment though they brooked no breach of court etiquette.

Not even the "Penitent Magdalene," Louvre (Fig. 18), with eyes swimming in tears could Nattier paint otherwise than a dainty posed maiden with every accessory used as a foil to enhance her beauty of person and posture. The whole picture is such a travesty of the subject that it would be absurd only that its Frenchy charm

captivates. That the little lady is about as penitent as any Magdalene of that day would be is very evident. Playing at penitence was only another phase of the light, frothy game of living. The great popularity that was Nattier's in middle life could not last and he came to realize, his daughter Madame Tocque writes, "That he had outlived his reputation."

Probably of all the French artists of the eighteenth century Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin (1699-1779) remains still a world master for excellence. Why? Because he told the truth simply and artistically. His art career is one of those anomalies in the life of individuals that no psychological reasoning explains. Living as he did when false standards were popular, when surface values were above par, when reputation counted for more than character, when artists were catering to a shallow, fickle public Chardin saw beauty in the humdrum doings and surroundings of the common or vulgar. This man with a vision was a true artist. Chardin was born of the people. Not even the fact that his father made billiard-tables for the king could fill the family larder or give his children distinction above the middle class. But fortunately the elder Chardin did recognize little Jean's talent

for painting and sent him to the studio of Cazes, a history painter of the day.

The first we really hear of Chardin's work as an artist is a sign board he painted for a barber-surgeon friend who had stipulated that the implements of his trade should be represented. But this was not Chardin's idea of a sign board. Without betraying his intentions he took a board fourteen feet wide by two feet high and portrayed a scene that was happening before the surgeon's very door. A man having been severely wounded in a street brawl is being attended by the barber-surgeon while the gathered crowd are watching proceedings with the greatest excitement.

Early one Sunday morning Chardin put the sign board in place above the shop. Very soon a crowd began to gather but when the owner saw what Chardin had done he first was ready to tear his hair with vexation but as more and more people kept coming to view the picture, he found his business was increasing and vexation turned to joy.

These homely scenes of daily life appealed to the hearts of the people. Nothing could be more charming than this little painting of "The Blessing," Jahan-Marcille Collection, Paris (Fig. 19), yet it attracted so much attention that the

artist painted five of the same subject. He has added the extra figure to the left in the illustration. The arrangement is simplicity itself. The little one on the low stool with her hands clasped is intent on saying her own little blessing before she, too, may have the dish of soup her mother has ready for her. Exquisite in colour and palpitating with light it soothes and charms like music from a perfectly tuned instrument.

Chardin pictures not only the family around the table but the implements used in preparing the meal. Look at this bit of "Still Life," La Case Collection, Louvre (Fig. 20), and see how free from pettiness is his detailed description of the brass kettle and the other articles. Such a kettle is a parlour ornament indeed! Most of his early paintings were still life—dead life, as the French say,—subjects that belong to all time, but his domestic scenes are so intimate that we feel the warmth of personal contact with those French homes of the eighteenth century.

Is it possible that the "Morning Toilet," National Museum, Stockholm (Fig. 21), is only a painting. There is such an atmosphere of reality about it that we wonder if the toilet is not actually being made before us. Surely the little girl will speak when her mother has finished tying the bow. It is impossible to tell why such a picture



FIG. 21.—The Morning Toilet. Chardin. National Museum, Stockholm.

gets into our very being. We know that Chardin was master of everything that enters into the making of a picture. As a colourist his contemporary, Diderot, exclaimed,

“He is the painter who understands the harmony of colour and reflections. O, Chardin, it is not white, red nor black that you grind to powder on your palette; it is the very substance of the objects themselves. It is the air and light that you take on the point of your brush and fix upon the canvas.”

CHAPTER IV

BOUCHER—LA TOUR—FRAGONARD—
GREUZE

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER (1703-1770) holds a strangely peculiar position in the history of French art in the eighteenth century. He was a man of so many parts that he knew no limitations. Louis XIV was dead and with him died the bombast of the times but not the extravagances. This grand monarch, like Augustus Caesar, found a Paris of brick and made it a city of marble. Palaces sprang up over the country of France where before were only marshes and bare plains. And then came Madame de Pompadour and François Boucher! True Louis XV was king in name but so completely was he under the baleful influence of the marchioness that her word was his law. She placed men in high places perfectly incompetent; generals and ministers were appointed and dismissed with such rapidity that Voltaire described them as "tumbling over each other like figures of a magic lantern." Extravagance of court, ruinous taxation and terrible in-

justice to the people had aroused public opinion—a public that included all classes—until disaster was so imminent that even the selfish king was aroused only, however, to remark, “Matters will go on as they are so long as I live: my successor may get out of the difficulty as well as he can.” And, “After us, the deluge,” repeated Madame Pompadour.

We can well understand what kind of an art to expect with such a background. And no one was more fitted to accommodate himself to the varying whims of monarch and mistress than the versatile François Boucher. He could paint allegory or religious subject, the gods of Olympus or the beauties of Louis XV court with equal facility. Or he could model a palace, lay out a garden, design dainty costumes or plan sumptuous meals with the same consummate skill. That he never rose to the height of a master in any of these callings is true but it is equally true that he chronicled unerringly the instability of the times. His numberless pictures in fresco and pastel and on canvas were in every royal residence, and his subjects were so varied that they fitted into church, theatre, or palace without a jarring note. There is always a lack of the permanent element in these decorative displays of Boucher’s that is evident in the froth of a ball room.

Many of his pictures are still in their original settings but even they give the tawdry effect of the day after the ball. As we stand before his decorations in the Grand Trianon, Versailles, and examine "Neptune and Amymone" (Fig. 22) the artificiality palls on us. There is lacking the genuine love of beauty for its own sake. Even the story of Amymone does not seem to have warmed Boucher's heart. Wrapped up in this legend is one of the oldest allegories of the near East. Amymone was one of fifty daughters of Danaos, who was the grandson of Neptune. (Poseidon), and the founder of Argos in Greece. Amymone discovered a well in Argos when the country was suffering from drought, in this manner: Neptune loved Amymone and allowed her to take his trident to touch the rock. A spring gushed forth with three outlets. Amymone's father Danaos had a twin brother Egyptos who had fifty sons. These sons married the daughters of Danaos and taught the Argives to dig wells in Argos, because the soil was like a sieve, and irrigate their fields like the Egyptians. But the daughters of Danaos were displeased with the marriage arrangements and all but one murdered her husband on the wedding night. As a just judgment they all were compelled in Hades to everlastingly draw water with sieves from



FIG. 22.—Neptune. Boucher. Grand Trianon, Versailles.



FIG. 23.—Mdme. de Pompadour. Boucher. Louvre, Paris.

deep wells. According to Bucher's version Neptune seems to have remembered his love for Amymone and has come to rescue her.

Naturally Boucher painted many pictures of Madame de Pompadour. For twenty years she was the most powerful woman at the French court. No one did her bidding more often than Boucher. They consulted together daily over garden fêtes, and masked balls, over wall decorations and appropriate furnishings, in fact every detail of living was submitted to the artistic taste of these two. In most of the portraits of Madame de Pompadour, Boucher really sums up the rococo of the eighteenth century. No one stood for that decadent, unorganized art more than he did. This is seen even in the gowns where ruffle and ruche and flower, bow, lace and ribbon follow each other in amazing profusion of crimps and crinkles and shimmers. However, Boucher does paint one "Portrait of Madame de Pompadour," Louvre (Fig. 23), where the texture of the silk alone is ornament enough to set off the charms of the lady. But even here stone balustrade and statues are bedecked with scrambling vines in a meaningless mass both confusing and annoying.

This style of art, still seen in the homes and grounds of the parvenu and also copied by his

followers, is the bane of art lovers today. Over decoration is never good form even when each flower, leaf and bud is done delicately and with artistic taste. That Boucher has given a most accurate picture of the mental calibre of his day is no doubt true but that in so doing he recorded the dominant characteristics of the French race is not true. Voltaire spoke much truer in his cutting invectives, sarcastic witticisms, and wholesale revelation of injustice. What cared he for prison walls! His was the spirit of France aroused to see the wrongs of her people.

A strange genius was Maurice-Quentin de La Tour (1707-1788). As a worker in pastel few have ever equalled him, and none made more permanent his finished work than did La Tour. The joy of the "Portrait of Madame de Pompadour," Louvre (Fig. 24), is its pristine beauty of colour and tone after nearly two hundred years. No modern loom could impart a finer sheen to white satin or give richer tints to gold embroidered designs than La Tour worked into that brilliant gown. Then, too, the books on the table and the music in her hands show that he understands the early tactics of the wily marquise to hold the variable Louis XV. She probably is just beginning (1755) to realize, as her listening attitude indicates, that she must regulate not music and



FIG. 24.—Mdme. de Pompadour. La Tour. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 25.—The Dauphine. La Tour.
Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 26.—Manelli. La Tour. Museum Saint Quentin, France.

reading alone but affairs of state as well if she is to be supreme.

A curious story is told with the history of this portrait of La Tour's arrogance that even the king had to endure. Only after the most persuasive entreaty would he consent to go to Versailles and then with the promise that no one should interrupt them at the sittings. When La Tour presented himself at Madame de Pompadour's he proceeded to make himself at home. He removed his wig and hung it on a candlestick, took off his garters, unbuckled his shoes, donned a silk cap and began to work. Very shortly the door opened and the king walked in. La Tour laid down his crayons, took up his wig and garters and said, retiring, "You promised, Madame, that your door should be closed to visitors." Even to the king's good-natured request that he go on with his work, he replied, "It is impossible for me to obey your majesty. I will return when Madame is alone. I don't like to be interrupted." The surprising fact is that this strange man held sway over his patrons until his death at eighty-four years of age.

This "Portrait of Louis, Dauphine of France," in the Louvre (Fig. 25), La Tour made ten years before he was made painter to the king and when the young prince was about ten years old (1740).

The boy is every inch a prince from rose-coloured coat crossed by a band of blue watered ribbon, of the Order of the Holy Ghost—to the decorations marking his royal birth. At sixteen the Dauphine married the youngest daughter of Philip V of Spain. The girl-wife died within a year. At once another wife was sought from among the princely families of Europe. The authorities decided on Marie Josephine, the daughter of the Elector of Saxony, King of Poland. This was not a happy union but fortunately the prince soon died which saved him from being Louis XVI—and from the scaffold.

It is delightful to get away from royalty with its stupid, scheming underlings and see what real people are doing in the eighteenth century. And where could one find more real life than in a company of strolling Italian opera singers. In the "Portrait of Manelli, the Leading Buffoon," Museum of St. Quentin, France (Fig. 26), La Tour portrays a grin that is contagious from its very genuineness. The man could no more help grinning at the absurdities of life than he could help breathing. And then the audacity of La Tour in exhibiting the portrait! When this troupe of Italians came to Paris, at once the whole city was divided as to which nation had the better music—Italy or France. Naturally the king and



FIG. 27.—Now Listen! I Want You to Say Please! Fragonard. Louvre, Paris.

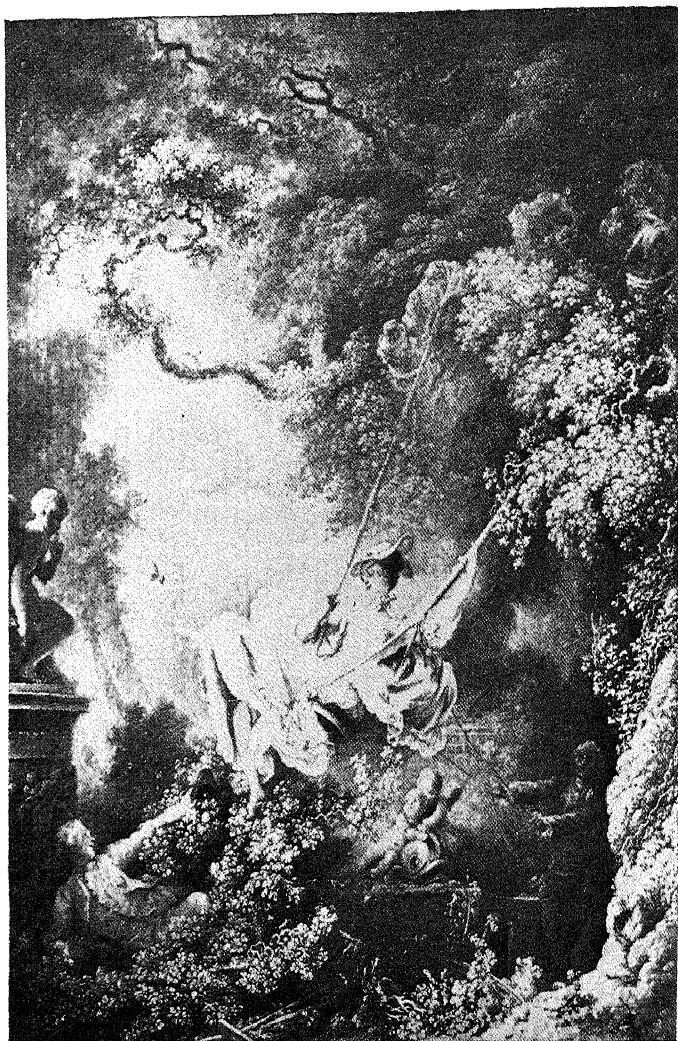


FIG. 28.—The Swing. Fragonard. Wallace Collection, London.

Madame de Pompadour decided in favour of France and just as naturally La Tour favoured Italy. But the king, having the greater authority, banished the Italians from France and La Tour, having the greater talent, immortalized the Italian buffoon, Manelli—and sent the portrait to the Salon of 1753. Exit Louis XV! Enter Manelli!!

If possible every one ought to see or to have seen (it is doubtful if much remains of the town today) La Tour's collection of portraits in the museum of his native town, St. Quentin, France. Such a typical array of notables seen through the eyes of one who could read the inward parts, could scarcely be imagined. Beginning with Louis XV, his queen, Marie Leczinska and his two famous mistresses, Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry; then follows men and women representing every phase of mental activity. There was the philosopher Rousseau, the dancer Mademoiselle Camaigo, the Marshal Saxe, the economist Forbonnais, the Prince Xavier of Saxony, the Abbé Huber, the painter Chardin and a host of others all looking out at us with an intelligence that fairly startles in its insistence. We can forgive La Tour's physical weakness, real or imaginary, that prevented him from painting in oil so long as he was a master

in pastel and spared no time nor strength in recording the underlying forces at work in the eighteenth century. His portraits are priceless treasures in portraiture.

We find ourselves halting between two opinions in estimating Jean-Honoré Fragonard's (1732-1806) work. No one could call him a great master though he perfectly reflects the last gasp of the decadent court. The effort required to play at living was requiring a constant spur. Red-blooded men of affairs were at a premium. Enjoyment like a flash in the pan, came only with fresh and unusual incentives and Frags—the artist's pet name—was a genius in representing just this glitter and sparkle on the surface of things that tickled the fancy. He did not hesitate at times to captivate the jaded pleasure seeker with scenes dangerously near the borderland of propriety, but his true artistic sense kept him on safe ground. It is really impossible to understand the wonderful restraint of an artist like Fragonard whose versatility and personal responsiveness were excessive without remembering the degeneracy of the age and the constant demands for appropriate decorations in the palace of each new favourite.

An unusually attractive picture of his, and one that must have brought a genuine spark of en-

thusiasm is, "Now listen! I want you to say 'Please,'" Louvre (Fig. 27). It is astonishing that any artist at this time should have thought of using these really human children and Fragonard was just the man to dare make the combination of court lady and rag-a-muffins. The little vagrants are full of the mischief of childhood. What care they that their fun is simply to amuse the jaded beauty! caresses and food is what they want. Surely Fragonard has been with little tots and learned of them.

In "The Swing," the Wallace Collection, London (Fig. 28), the exquisite light and shade, the delicate play of colour and the gnarled and twisted tree form a charming setting for the swinger. The gay abandon of the scene annuls the criticism of its being frivolous. Fragonard was born in the south of France, at Grasse, a little town near Nice. His southern inheritance grafted on the court life of Louis XV was just the combination to make him peculiarly fitted to represent French art of the eighteenth century.

We like to believe that this "Portrait of Benjamin Franklin" (Fig. 29), is a genuine Fragonard. We wonder what mutual bond brought these two men together.

The portrait was bought by the American painter, Mr. P. A. Gross, some years ago. French

critics believe the picture to be by Fragonard. The facts are well known that the artist and Franklin were friends and that the former made an allegorical engraving of the famous Quaker. Strange coincidence that these two men so unlike in temperament, training and environment should have become friends. One represented a people standing for belief in God, moral uprightness and integrity; the other for a people in the last stages of a born-to-rule kingdom, but a kingdom out of which was to come the glorious French Republic of today. Who knows but that Franklin recognized in this artist of diversified talents the spirit that would finally triumph, though a revolution of bloodshed must needs come first. One cannot come in close touch with the artists of France during the reigns of Louis XIV and XV without being convinced that the fundamental principal in art is the cord that holds the nation and binds it to all free peoples on the earth. This elemental cord made up of truth, simplicity and harmony, has been drawing on humanity since time began. Not always are its twists and turns understandable; and many times it binds too tight and again too loose, but nevertheless it constantly tends to unify the human race. No one can look at the Assyrian Lioness of 4000 B. C. and Barry's lion of the Tuileries 1900 A. D.

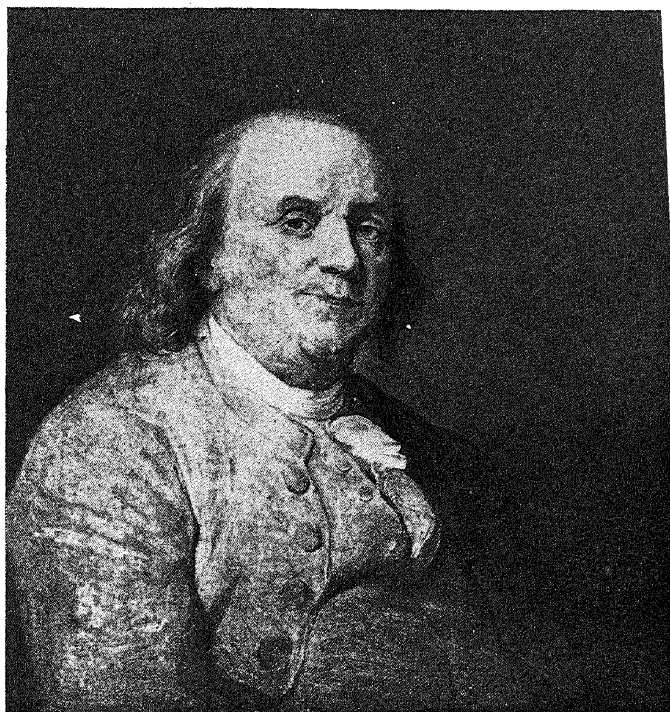


FIG. 29.—Portrait of Benjamin Franklin. Fragonard.
Private Collection.

without recognizing that the same elemental cord is in them both. Certainly Fragonard failed in making this elemental cord felt in many of his pictures, yet when a personality like Franklin's touched him a hidden strength was awakened and a new power shone out from his canvas. We are fortunate in having the frescos of an entire room of Fragonards. Mr. Pierpont Morgan brought these frescos to the United States and now they are in place in Mr. Henry Frick's new home on Fifth Avenue, New York City.

When Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805) painted "The Broken Pitcher," Louvre (Fig. 30), all Paris was eager to do him honour yet when he came to the end of life and Napoleon heard of his death, he exclaimed, "Dead! Poor and neglected! Why did he not speak? I would gladly have given him a pitcher of Sèvres filled with gold for every copy ever made of his 'Broken Pitcher.'" Public taste is as variable as the weather cock on the steeple but like the proverbial cock with its teeterings this way and that it does trend toward right judgment in the final reckoning. The surprise is that any art so insipid as Greuze's held the public taste at all. The only possible excuse must be the nauseated condition of the public, fed up on pictures of royalty until any antidote was acceptable. Greuze chose

his subjects from among the people and used his art to point a moral. But unfortunately Greuze was not a Hogarth though he thought to purify society with his brush.

The one subject Greuze did treat with fair success was "Maidenhood," National Gallery, London (Fig. 3). Over and over again he painted the young girl of France but not the universal young girl who is,

"Standing with reluctant feet
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!
Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse!"

No, no, the guiding spirit of childhood has turned away from his worldly-wise maidens. They no longer hear voices or see visions; they have lost the wistful, hesitating charm of innocent wondering that Longfellow understood so well was the girl's birthright a half century ago. Greuze did paint well the physical charms of youth—none knew better than he how to fluff the hair, tint the cheeks, pout the cherry-red lips, open the startled eyes or slyly peep from under the drooping lids. But no awakening soul shines in the opening flower. No spiritual element breathes from the physical beauty.



FIG. 30.—The Broken Fitcher. Greuze.
Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 31.—Maidenhood. Greuze.
National Gallery, London.



FIG. 32.—The Village Bride. Greuze. Louvre,
Paris.

Greuze's inordinate vanity in his own work would show itself in such expressions as, "Here is a picture which astonishes me who painted it. It is perfectly incomprehensible how a man can put so much life into a canvas." This self praise made him very unpopular with artists and even his friends—men like Diderot, who was at first loud in his praise, would say, "He is a little vain, our painter, but his vanity is that of a child, the indication of genius. Take his naïvete from him and you take away his spirit; the fire would be extinguished and all his charm gone."

Greuze really specialized in two subjects, the young girl and illustrative pictures. Of the latter he planned a series of twenty-six on "The two Educators." Something on the order of Hogarth's "Industry and Idleness," but this he never finished. When "The Village Bride," Louvre (Fig. 32), was exhibited in 1761 the public knew no bounds in its praise of the painting; and no doubt, as Diderot wrote, "It certainly is the best thing he has painted," which does not, however, make it a masterpiece. Diderot does go to say that it "does him honour both as a painter skilled in his art and as a man of taste and genius." It seems strange that so brilliant a man as the art critic, Diderot, should have been so blinded to the weakness of Greuze. That "The Village

Bride" was more than acceptable at the time of unrest and storm, when home centres were being contaminated with loose, disintegrating elements is natural. Doubtless some thinking people—yes, and unthinking ones too, felt conscience tweaking a little and were eager to welcome any sign that indicated a return to purer ideals. If only Greuze could have given a semblance of truth and sincerity in picturing this scene so pregnant with higher thoughts. A picture showing a return to the belief that the marriage ceremony was indeed a holy wedlock entered into with the blessing of God was unique because such a belief was rare in these degenerate days. We feel that the yearning gesture of the old father's trembling arms does give a glimmer of real feeling and that the blushing bride does faintly suggest serious thoughts stirring in her silly head.

CHAPTER V

DAVID

THERE are people not really great who, somehow in the march of events, are markers along the way indicating progress, and Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825) was one of these markers. The French were tired of being fed on "Rococo" in everything that pertained to life. Things spectacular, sentimental and unreal had distorted the mind and warped the judgment until everything was in a state of ferment. The Revolution had become a reality. Playing at living was at an end. How to get back stability was the burning question. Fortunately art, which never fails as a source of strength, was found a steadying force. It matters little how low men drag these elemental forces, they never kill the producing germs.

David, a native of Paris, grew up in the atmosphere of revolution and evolution. At a very early age he began drawing from the antique and during this formative period he was under the instruction of the painter, Joseph Marie Vien,

in Rome, who had studied the classic Greek first hand. At twenty-two David decided to win the Grand Prize of Rome but failed to gain the honour. Then, like many another sensitive art student, he proceeded to starve himself to death. When he came to himself, or rather when his friends brought him to himself, he was given an order, by an opera dancer, to finish some rococo decorations begun by Fragonard. Success in this work put life into him and again he competed for the Prize of Rome and won. And now began the real development of the man who was to be "the great high priest of classicism." But, as is usually true, this movement toward the classic, headed by David, also struck the extreme and then another upheaval in art followed.

An account of the life of David is really a history of France from the time Louis XVI sat insecurely on the throne, through the revolution, the marvellous career of Napoleon even to the return of the kingdom with Louis XVIII as king. The history of David's art career embodies the growing discontent in the Academy its division, with David as the head of the insurgents, and the development of an entirely new attitude toward art. Both these movements were the natural products of the destruction of royalty and the construction of a republic. David, how-

ever, did not live to see the latter; he only heard faint murmurings of the great Barbizon awakening. Portraiture was really the high water mark of David's art. His classic training kept the accessories simple and restrained while his intense nature, eagerly absorbing every changing aspect of national affairs, gave him an insight into the mental attitude of his sitters. The struggle between royalist and radical usually found him leaning to the one in power—first he was painter to Louis XVI, then he was Napoleon's right hand man—ever swinging with the ruling force. This weakness often lost him his liberty and nearly his life.

David, so constantly mixed up with affairs of state—posing to keep faith with the extreme royalist on the one hand and the extreme republican (the "Sansculotte," ragged-fellow) on the other—has given many side lights revealing the men who held the real binding cord that was ever saving France. In this picture of "Michel Gérard and his Family," Museum of Le Mans, France (Fig. 33), he gives us a portrait of the man elected by the people of the city of Rheims, France, to represent them in the National Convention during the Revolution. He it was who answered the question of what he candidly thought of this Parliamentary work, with the

honest, cutting words, "I think that there are a good many schoundrals among us." Carlyle most aptly remarks, "So walks Father Gérard: solid in his thick soles, whithersoever bound."

Nothing could be more unconventional than this family group yet each member is posed to emphasize the importance of the father. The two boys dressed in the conventional costumes of the period have that look of pride that public recognition of a parent always stamps on the children. We fix our eyes on the fine face of that father. Yes, Carlyle is right, "The name Gérard, or Pere Gérard, Father Gérard, as they please to call him, will fly far; borne about in endless banter; in Royalist satire, in Republican didactic almanacs." If only Father Gérard could have had his way some of the horrors might have been averted in that awful period of French history. His strong, kind face with the steady eyes seeing through the pretence into the motives, reveals the real solidity of this torn and bleeding nation. Such a picture coming out of the turmoil of the last gasp of the eighteenth century is a lightning flash showing that so long as true family centres exist and home fires burn nations cannot fall asunder.

When a boy David received a blow on his jaw that, as he grew older, was not only a disfigure-

ment but so increased his natural hesitancy of speech that public speaking was impossible. But even this impediment did not hinder his election as President of the National Convention and also as a member of that terrible "Committee of Public Safety." And in 1793 he was one of the convention who voted for the death of Louis XVI—his former patron. Carlyle's scathing words fittingly sum up this side of the artist's character—fortunately, however, characters are not always revealed in one phase of a person's life. We realize, though, that no one flopping with the governments as David did, could be unlike "A man bodily and mentally swoln-cheeked, disproportionate; flabby-large, instead of great; weak withal in a state of convulsion, not strong in a state of composure: so let him play his part." Is it possible that this is the man who painted the portrait of Father Gérard?

We are constantly made to see that David's fickle patriotism (?) has worked to our advantage in the vivid pictures he painted revealing the various phases of the changing governments. And these pictures often give intimate characteristics, especially portraits, of world-famed men and women. This is specially true of the "Portraits of Lavoisier and his Wife," De Chazelles Collection, Paris. No student in Chemistry today

is ignorant of Antoine Laurent Lavoisier (1743-1794), the founder of modern chemistry. He exploded the "phlogistic principle"—a system assuming that the above was in all combustible substances and that it was set free in the process of combustion. A special service was held honouring this triumph of truth over ignorance in which Madame Lavoisier, acting as high priestess, before an altar gave to the flames the "phlogiston principle," where it went up in smoke accompanied by a requiem to the peace of its soul. Although Lavoisier belonged to the privileged "farmer-generals," we cannot believe him one of the profiteers for he was appointed director of the government powder-mills in 1776. Nothing could save him, however, when the "Farmer-Generals" came under the Revolutionary tribunal. He asked for a fortnight to finish some experiments but "the Republic does not need such." All Farmer-Generals must give an account even to "putting water in the tobacco," and all must die—April 22, 1794. We could weep as we look into the beautiful face David has bequeathed to us only that we know the spirit of the great man has been leading France and the world up to Victory. This wonderful spirit that deals with eternal verities!

But with all his frailties, David could paint a



FIG. 33.—Michel Gerard and Family. David. Le Mans Museum, France.



FIG. 34.—Portrait of Mme. Recamier. David. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 35.—Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine. David. Louvre, Paris.

"Portrait of Madame Récamier," Louvre, Paris (Fig. 34), which will ever stand as a true likeness of that noted woman. She was only sixteen when she married Monsieur Jacques Récamier, a man nearly three times her age. It was a natural sequence that many admirers courted the young wife but only Prince Augustus of Prussia seems to have won her love and a promise to marry him. But the kindly willingness of M. Récamier to grant her freedom—he had lost his property—so touched her heart that she refused to leave him in his need. Later, after her husband's death, the great Chateaubriand, author and statesman, wished to make her his wife but she declined the honour. We remember Madame Récamier best in her friendship for that other great woman of the time, Madame de Staël (see page 63). Wonderful indeed were the Salons of these two brilliant women! In them were gathered the greatest intellects of all Europe. Little wonder that Napoleon feared the two royalist women and exiled them from France.

David was painting this portrait of Madame Récamier in 1800, but for some unknown reason the noble lady decided she did not like the picture and never came to have it finished. She, however, had Gérard, David's pupil, paint her (see Fig. 38) little realizing that the unfinished por-

trait would be the one to far outrank Gérard's. As we enter the long gallery where it hangs it is almost the first picture among hundreds of others to catch our eye. Its simplicity suggests a Greek goddess in her shrine. The tiny lamp with its faint cloud of incense stands guard over the couch of the fair one as she turns to look out on life's allurements. Her white robe unadorned with lace or frill is in perfect keeping with the severity of the couch; her gracefully curved arm carries out the lines of the bent ends and rounded pillows of the sofa. In the arrangement of the hair David gives a glimpse of the girlish beauty of a charming woman but even here the band of black velvet holds the locks from too riotous liberty. This picture was never finished according to David but to us it is one of his best paintings.

Again the national kaleidoscope shifts and with it shifts David. Now we find him at work on large canvases glorifying Napoleon. In the Louvre, Paris, is his "Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine" (Fig. 35), a picture measuring some eleven yards in width and seven yards high. The scene, in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris, December 2, 1804, is almost the exact counterpart of the original coronation. On the steps of the high altar with raised hands stands Napoleon holding the crown he is to place on the

head of the kneeling Josephine. Behind Napoleon sits Pope Pius VII who has just crowned him. To the right and left are the high dignitaries, princes of the royal family and the new Emperor's brothers. Back of the central group, on a tribune above sits Napoleon's mother—not present at the real ceremony but introduced in the picture at her son's wish—and above her is David himself sketching the group. David was given a studio in the old church of the College of Cluny near Notre Dame and there Napoleon went in state to view the finished picture January 4, 1808. David and his assistants stood in silence waiting the verdict. At last came the words, "It is well done, David, very well. You have divined my thoughts; you have represented me as the embodiment of French chivalry. I am indebted to you for handing down to posterity this proof of affection which I have desired to show her who shares with me the cares of government." The Emperor then stepped up to the artist and raising his hand with that spectacular display he was so fond of creating, said in a loud voice, "David, I salute you!" The deeply affected artist answered, "Sire, I receive your congratulations in the name of all artists, happy indeed to be the one you deign to address." After Napoleon's first abdication the original painting of the Cor-

onation of Napoleon and Josephine was destroyed by order of the Bourbons, but on the return of Napoleon to Paris, this one was ordered from the artist.

As a fit climax to this painting is David's "Portrait of Pope Pius VII (Fig. 36), Louvre. We can imagine the silent contention going on in these great minds—Napoleon and Pius VII—when with arrogant authority the little emperor took the crown from the hands of the Holy Father and himself placed it on the head of Josephine. David unwittingly expresses the real reason of the apparent submission to royal prerogative in the face of Pius VII. Those penetrating eyes reading the signs of the times knew that Rome held France only as she held Napoleon and to hold Napoleon meant yielding when a rupture was imminent. Even that, however, did not save the pope from imprisonment or the annexation of the Papal States to France.

Always quick to catch the slightest hint to strengthen his hold on his patrons it is not surprising that he catered to Napoleon's weakest point—his inordinate vanity. David's portraits of this marvellous man form an interesting study in the development of vanity into the monstrous ambition that caused his downfall. How true to life is the portrait "Bonaparte Crossing Mount

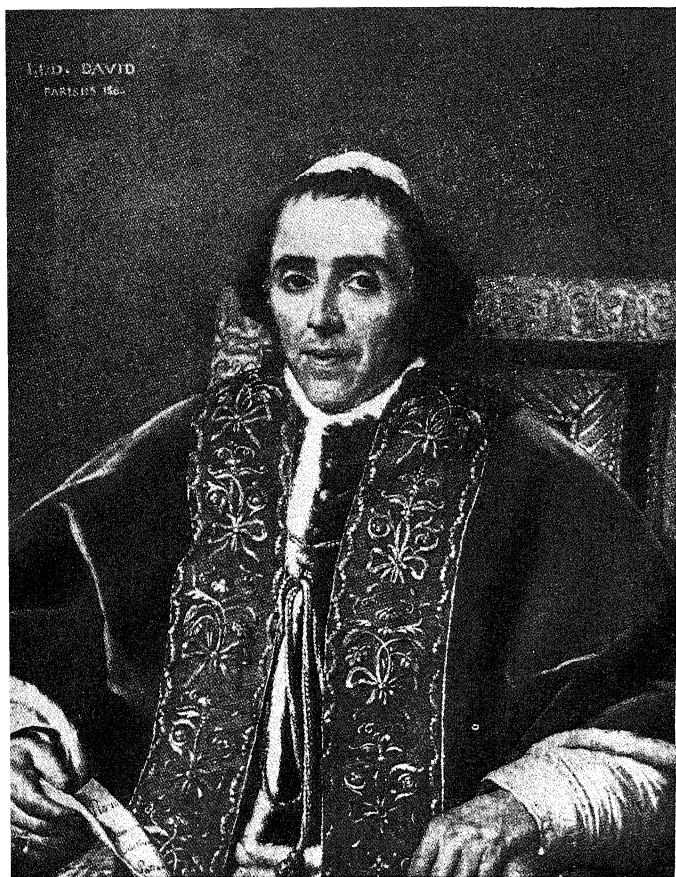


FIG. 36.—Portrait of Pius VII. David. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 37.—Portrait of Bonaparte Crossing the Alps. David. Versailles, France.

St. Barnard," Versailles, France (Fig. 37). Napoleon had accomplished his end in Italy and of course wanted David to make a new portrait of him but on his own terms. "No, my dear David," he said, to the suggestion that he have a sword in his hand, "it is not with the sword that battles are won. I would be painted calm and serene upon a fiery steed." As we look back on these makers of history from our vantage ground we, too, exclaim, "There were giants in the earth in those days!" Not that David was equal to the task of making a great picture of this theatrical figure set ready for the curtain to rise, far from it, yet the spirit of conquest that ignored snow-capped peaks and pushed through the heart of mountains carries beyond the picture to the deeds that are still making history.

But who shall decide whether this man, David, was a genius or a genie who at will without good looks or grace of speech could draw royalist or common people under his influence and obtain from them the highest honours in state and art? Certainly a strange power was his that held people; and an equally strange nature was his that responded to the spectacular whatever the political trend. Possibly it was the latter that kept his head on his shoulders when the guillotine was insatiable. He never failed to satisfy the public

demand with an appropriate scene to celebrate an event whether the event was decapitating a crowd or crowning a head.

David's spectacular career ended with Napoleon though he might not have been exiled after the Restoration if he had humbled himself to ask it. He spent the remainder of his life in Brussels where he died in 1825. The French Government refused to have his body returned to its native soil and he lies today in the cemetery of Saint Josseten-Noode, Brussels.

CHAPTER VI

GÉRARD—MADAME LEBRUN

AS we turn to Baron François Pascal Gérard's (1770-1837) "Portrait of Madame de Staël" (Fig. 38), we can well understand why she was styled the homeliest woman in Europe, but how she could talk! No wonder that Napoleon was afraid to meet her fearing her eloquence would win him. Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier were both royalists and consequently he banished them both. What a Salon that must have been where the most beautiful woman and the finest conversationalist in all Europe were the entertainers. Madame de Staël spent most of her girlhood at the court of Louis XVI where her father, Jacques Necker, was prime minister, and naturally she was constantly in touch with the greatest thinkers of the time—and never had France greater problems to solve than at this time. Gérard's picture certainly is that of a woman keenly alive to the issues of the day but the pity is that he was not big enough to grasp the soul behind those powerful features. Oh, that a

Titian or Velasquez or Rembrandt could have arisen to this occasion! Gérard became one of the most sought after portrait painters of his day; he had charm of manner and was a brilliant conversationalist yet his real talent lay in choosing famous sitters, such as Talleyrand, Duke of Wellington, etc.

There were times, however, when Gérard did reveal something of the mental attitude of his subjects possibly because of an intimate friendship between them. This is true of his "Portrait of Isabey and his Little Daughter," Louvre (Fig. 39). The two artists, Isabey and Gérard, were personal friends and nearly the same age—Isabey was three years older (1767) but he outlived Gérard twenty years (1855). Isabey was nearly thirty years old when Gérard painted this picture and was then miniaturist to Marie Antoinette and other notables while Gérard was still unknown. But a turning point in Gérard's art career came with the exhibition of this portrait of Isabey, for it was a great success. Then followed a portrait of Madame Bonaparte that established Gérard's position as a portrait painter.

Certainly there is something very attractive about this portrait of Isabey and his little daughter. Gérard seems to have caught them just as they were ready for a walk. How well the dog



FIG. 38.—Portrait of Mdme. de Staël. Gerard.



FIG. 39.—Portrait of Isabey and Daughter. Gerard. Louvre, Paris.

in the doorway emphasizes the fact of an interrupted walk without in the least protesting that he was dragged in to complete the scene! The whole picture is one of those happy inspirations, vouched to even mediocre artists at times, that give masterpieces to the world.

When Gérard painted the "Portrait of Madame Récamier," Louvre (Fig. 40), her ladyship may have been better satisfied than she was with the one David painted (see Fig. 34) but surely we are not. Such incongruous uniting of classic and modern clearly stamps the weakness of the artist. As a likeness this picture no doubt was more pleasing to Madame Récamier, for she is indeed beautiful, but the too evident pose to bring out her beauty is disconcerting to say the least. We suspect that if fame had not pronounced her the most beautiful woman in Europe Gérard would scarcely have held his own with this picture.

Napoleon appointed Gérard official painter to the court in 1806. We owe this artist a debt of gratitude for numberless portraits of noted persons in the public eye. Many faces of men and women who were making history at the time would not have been familiar to us if Gérard had not painted their portraits.

Marie Elizabeth Louise Vigée Lebrun (1755-1842) holds a unique place in French art in that

she is the first woman of France since Queen Matilda to be publicly recognized as a painter. France was quick to acknowledge her exceptional women as leaders—and she has had a goodly number in many and varied capacities pertaining to the nation's welfare except in the field of art. In that branch of the nation's economic needs few women have qualified. France, however, is not an exception in this peculiar dearth of women artists. This is a strange lapse in nature when we remember the tremendous women who stand out all along the centuries as leaders at critical points in the history of world-nations.

Madame Lebrun was only seven or eight years old when her artist father, seeing a sketch of a man's head that she had made by lamplight, exclaimed proudly, "You will be a painter, my child, if ever there was one." She had just entered her teens when her beloved father died, and in her words we learn of her grief. "So heartbroken was I that it was long before I felt equal to taking up my pencil again. Doyen used to come to see us sometimes, and as he had been my father's best friend his visits were a comfort. It was he who urged me to resume the occupation I loved, and in which, to tell the truth, I found the only consolation for my grief."

At fifteen Madame Lebrun was recognized as a full fledged artist and her studio was the collecting place for diplomats of the time. This is not surprising for her rare beauty and simple charm of manner endeared her to all. Her extreme youth, combined with a talent that mature artists might envy, captivated the cleverest statesmen and most distinguished artists. Even those of noble blood and the most wily courtiers came to do her honour. It was amusing, the wisdom of the little artist when the admiration of these great men bordered on the vanishing point of wholesome friendship. She said, "I used to paint them looking another way and then at the least movement of their pupils toward me I would cry, 'Now I am doing the eyes.' This was of course rather trying to them." And then she added, "And my mother, who was always present, used to laugh quietly to herself."

Madame Lebrun's life was peculiarly full of incidents connected with royalty. It is said that she painted more reigning monarchs than any artist who has ever lived. We are specially interested in the friendship that grew up between the artist and Queen Marie Antoinette. The awful days of the Revolution are drawing near as these two women sit together day after day in the Palace of Versailles. In that deserted palace to-

day we look upon the sweet sad face of "Marie Antoinette and her Children" (Fig. 41), as Madame Lebrun has pictured it for us. The picture was painted when the popularity of the queen had waned and already the people were looking on the illfated woman as a cause for the downfall of France. The portrait was accepted with enthusiasm because of the artist and shown in the Academy of 1787. After the close of the Salon the king, Louis XVI, had it sent to Versailles and on conversing with Madame Lebrun about it, he said, "I do not know much about painting, but you make me love it."

This picture really gives us the best understanding of the family of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette extant. The boy, holding the curtain aside, is the Dauphin next in line to be king. Fortunately he died (1789) before the storm that broke engulfed the royal household. The empty cradle probably refers to the recent death of the baby sister, Princess Sophie. The little two-year old, Duc de Normandy, sitting in the queen's lap is the child whose awful existence during the fearful cataclysm that shook the very foundations of the French nation, can never be forgiven by humanity. It is one of the blackest crimes of the French Revolution, the treatment of this innocent child. Authorities differ

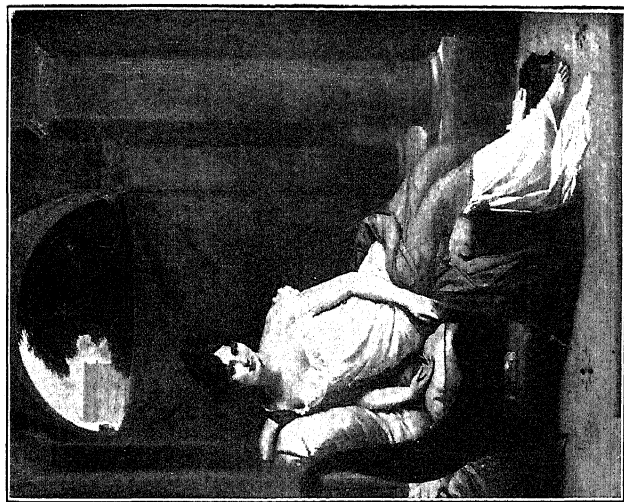


FIG. 40.—Portrait of Mme. Recamier. Gerard. Louvre, Paris.

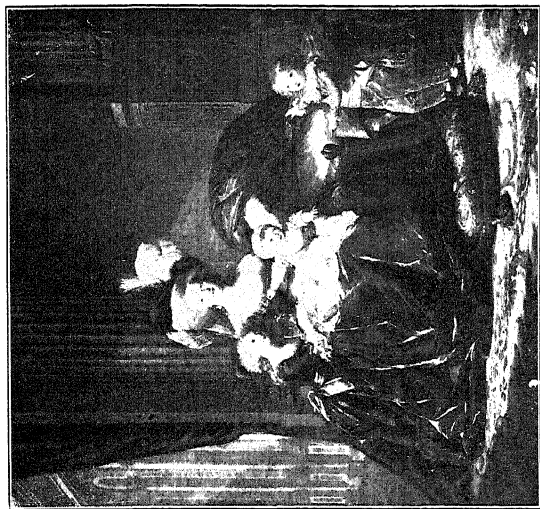


FIG. 41.—Marie Antoinette and Her Children. Mme. Lebrun. Versailles, France.



FIG. 42.—Portrait of Marie Antoinette. Mdme. Lebrun. Versailles,
France.

as to the final destiny of the little Louis. Some assert he died in prison; others that he escaped and lived in exile in England and still others that he came to America.

The little girl leaning against the queen is Princess Marie T  r  se—the only one of the royal family who survived the Reign of Terror. It is from her that we have many details of the horrible time. When the storm had partly spent itself—after both king and queen were beheaded—she was released from prison on her seventeenth birthday, December 18, 1795. Her life story for the next fifty years covered the time of Napoleon and the growth of the Republic of France.

Now let us stop for a moment and look at this "Portrait of Queen Marie Antoinette," Palace of Versailles (Fig. 42). Is it possible that this was the woman that roused the vindictive hatred of the French people scarcely a century and a quarter ago? There is nothing in that lovely face to indicate traits that would rouse a whole nation to fury. Was it this woman or was it that other feminine monster La Guillotine, that had turned the brain of the people until rolling heads—it mattered little whose—was their ruling passion? Madame Lebrun has lightened the gloom of those terrible days in giving us these intimate pictures

of the royal family. We feel that amid all the tragedy of the time love and beauty and purity still remained.

Madame Lebrun painted some twenty portraits of herself. This "Portrait of the Artist and her Daughter," Louvre (Fig. 43), is a popular one of the mother and child together. As we look at the bright, happy face of the young mother it is hard to realize that already the tragedy of her life had begun. Her marriage to M. Lebrun was anything but a blessing. He was a spendthrift and a gambler, selfish and penurious to the last degree. All the earnings of the talented young wife were used for his own comfort while she was relegated to two small rooms in the mansion he built for himself with her earnings. In these rooms, however, the élite of Paris gathered and found it no hardship to sit on the bed and floor to bask in the radiating charms of the wonderful woman. And now look at the daughter. Does it seem possible that this innocent child was to be a counterpart of her detestable father? She was scarcely grown before her wilful selfishness, a constant sorrow to the devoted mother, led into a marriage at seventeen to a man twice her age. This marriage proved disastrous and turned the girl still further away from her mother. These portraits of Madame Le-



FIG. 43.—Portrait of Artist and Daughter. Mdme. Lebrun. Louvre, Paris.

brun and her daughter have rarely been equalled in the portrayal of the close devotion of a mother to a growing child—and the clinging dependence of the young offspring.

Madame Lebrun, unlike David, remained loyal to the royal family, for which she was banished from France by Napoleon. Her life was full of change and great domestic unhappiness and only after three score years was she really free from family animosities. She continued to love the social life of the young until her death at eighty-seven.

CHAPTER VII

PRUDHON—GROS—INGRES—VERNET

IT is simply impossible to estimate an artist like David without considering the time in which he lived. And to consider his art without connecting it intimately with the affairs of the nation, whether the nation be governed by king or people, is equally impossible. But in Pierre Paul Prudhon (1758-1823), who was trained in the same school of life as David, we find a man whose art stood apart from the turmoil of his day. He allowed neither the prescribed tenets of art nor the demands for specialized pictures of events or functions of state to turn him from his own ideals. Though not claimed by the purely classic he never ignored the fundamentals of that school. In fact he vivified its formal rules in drawing and composition until what is cold and lifeless in David is warm and throbbing from Prudhon's brush. This was due to his intimate understanding of colour as a medium for expressing moods. His intensely sympathetic nature was strained to

the breaking point as year by year friend after friend fell under the awful monster "La Guillotine," yet he never faltered in his art only that his colour grew more and more mysteriously soothing to the heart of afflicted humanity.

No one can look at "Justice and Divine Vengeance pursuing Crime," Louvre (Fig. 44), and not feel lifted above the tragedies that come in everyday life to the bigger purpose of existence. Prudhon painted this picture in 1808 for the Criminal Court. Could any scene be a more powerful reminder to the presiding judge that justice and right are inexorable in their demand for a sane unprejudiced judgment after the most profound consideration of the greatest good to both condemned and condemner? Very powerfully Prudhon has expressed the deed of darkness by illuminating it with soft moonlight. The delicate flesh of the victim—still quivering under the receding life blood—is as firm and wholesome as a growing boy's while the ugly look on the face of the criminal is that of evil thoughts that have tainted his whole body. The pursuing figures show no vindictiveness in face or action and their pursuit is of evil rather than of the evil doer. Never has the story of that first great crime been more vividly told in picture. The simple words, "And the Lord set a mark upon

Cain, lest any finding him should kill him," before his punishment was meted out are so subtly portrayed in the picture that they apply to every murderer, of every country, for all time. Prudhon no doubt expressed in this masterpiece a little of the agony of heart that still gripped the French people. He could never in his art throw off the memory of the Revolution and yet that memory was softened by his belief in the deeper import of art and this belief makes his art universal in its appeal. Every court room in every land would be a better place of justice with a copy of Prudhon's masterpiece hung on its walls.

As we turn to the "Assumption," in the Louvre (Fig. 45), not only Prudhon's strength in drawing strikes us but his unique conception of a much used subject. The ease and grace of the two figures supporting the virgin are well expressed and accentuate the idea of the virgin's own supernatural ascent into heaven. See how well he contrasts the clear light and rich colour of the foreground with the delicate flesh-tints of the phantom-like cloud of witnesses and the hazy-blue atmosphere of the background.

Prudhon was born in Cluny, a town noted for its Benedictine Abbey Church, next in size to old St. Peter's, a massive Romanesque with seven towers, double aisles and double trans-



FIG. 44.—Justice and Divine Vengeance Pursuing Crime.
Prudhon. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 45.—The Assumption of the Virgin.
Prudhon. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 46.—Francis I and Charles V
visiting Royal Tombs, St. Denis.
Gros. Louvre, Paris.

septs. The monks were expelled from Cluny in 1789 just as Prudhon went to Paris after seven years study in Rome. The church was all but destroyed in the Revolution—only one south transept and its tower remain and two beautiful chapels. The old town or rather small city, has more renown from its son, the artist Pierre Paul Prudhon, than from the hundreds of Benedictine monks who made their home there.

Some artists stand definitely for the classic—in France classic meant perfection of form—as David, and some swing completely to the romantic,—romantic meant imaginings resembling life—as Delacroix. But such a man as Jean Antoine Gros (1771–1835) stands as a connecting link holding to the classic with one hand but opening the way—a way so full of charm that those who entered were legion—into the romantic with the other hand. It took courage for Gros to break away from the formalism of his master David, but how could he do justice to the sun flooded, colour soaked “The Pest at Jaffa,” swimming in the glorious sea air of the Mediterranean, without giving place to action, to colour, to light and to atmosphere? Of course this temerity on the part of his pupil aroused the fighting blood of David and unfortunately, Gros finally gave way to the older man, not to his advantage however. Fail-

ing in his attempt in competing with the romantics he closed his studio, saying bitterly, "I know no misfortune greater than to survive one's self."

One of Gros' pictures that admirably illustrates his skill in overcoming the formality of the classic without losing its repose and dignity is "The Visit of Francis I and Charles V to the Royal Tombs at St. Denis," Louvre (Fig. 46). Why Gros should have chosen this lugubrious subject is strange except that anything pertaining to royalty was acceptable just after the Revolution. He has shown a marked degree of restraint in arranging the royal party with an eye to the pictorial effect of the gorgeous costumes against the massive stone pillars. The subdued light in the old cathedral breathes a sense of mystery over the gathered crowd in the galleries and tones the glorious colour of doublet and plumes and gold lace into a harmonious bouquet in the central group. Notice how beautifully the light falling on the grey stone slabs gives life to the royal visitors.

After Napoleon's campaign into Italy, Gros was appointed as one of the committee to go and select the works of art to be taken from the conquered cities of Italy to France. That he selected well the "Travelled Horses" of San Marco gives

proof—but we are glad they were returned to their rightful home again. Napoleon made the artist a baron and he became a member of the Institute in 1816. These honours did not, however, allay his bitter humiliation at the cutting criticisms over his vacillation in adhering to the new art stand that he himself had founded. His mind snapped under the strain and he committed suicide in the Seine.

Jean-Antoine-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) spent more than half his long life of eighty-seven years bringing the French people to the point of believing in him as an artist. Even his father was determined he should be a musician because he learned to play the violin very young and at twelve played in the theatre of Toulouse. Then, too, the money prospects were greater in music than in painting, the father thought. But the boy at sixteen, making his own choice, became a permanent pupil of David's studio for four years. His rapid progress made him a favourite pupil but when his work elicited the praise of other artists, especially Flaxman, the English sculptor, David's jealousy was aroused which ended the close friendship of master and pupil. Undoubtedly the loss of David's prestige worked against Ingres' acceptance in the Paris art world.

After several years more of study in Paris he went to Italy. For five years, as a pensioner of the French Academy—he had gained the Grand Prize of Rome in 1706,—and for eighteen years he studied the old masters, particularly Raphael.

Ingres sent his first picture, "Œdipus and the Sphinx," Louvre (Fig. 47), two years after he went to Rome. This work showing plainly his divergence from the classic training of David, aroused still greater criticism of his methods, which proved him a power to be reckoned with. No one could look at the vigorous young Greek bending so carelessly before the monster yet with stern eye holding the opposing power at bay, without feeling the human element as against the cold formality of the old classic school. Of course Ingres held to the classic spirit but he recognized that representing life was something more than cutting figures in stone.

The old Greek legend, in the hands of Ingres, assumed some of the life of the original story when the monster sphinx—half woman and half brute—was destroying all men who could not solve her riddle. When the handsome Œdipus met her on her own ground and boldly explained that her creature of four feet in the morning, two feet at noon and three feet at night was M A N.

So great was the chagrin of the sphinx that she herself fell over the cliff and was killed, thus ridding the country of her ravages and saving Thebes.

This humanized picture, however, was not at all to the liking of his countryman. Year after year he grew in his art gaining nothing in reputation or money, but never wavering from the high standard he had set for himself. His constant remark was, "I count my old age to avenge me," a prophecy that came true.

A beautiful romance came to Ingres while in Rome, from his native city, Montanban, in a young woman who became his inspiration, as his wife. She heard of his discouragement through friends and deliberately sought him out and for over forty years faithfully and lovingly stood by his side. His native city, too, at last recognized his worth and through the French administration of Fine Arts he painted "The Vow of Louis XIII," for the Cathedral of Montanban. The picture was exhibited at the Salon of 1824 where it received universal sanction and Ingres, returning to Paris after eighteen years, sprang into renown. This did not last however, for now the romanticists took up the cudgel and again Ingres left Paris for Rome and nearly another eighteen years passed before his country was

ready to receive him with honour, and this time, in 1841, the honour was genuine.

Fortunately we have Ingres' "Portrait of Madame Leblanc," in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 48). This famous portrait and the one of M. Leblanc, once owned by Degas, the artist (see page 236) was bought in Paris at the sale of the Degas collection in March 1918, after the last German offensive of the great war. The pictures were stored in France until transportation was safe, and now they are in their new home.

About twenty studies of this portrait of Madame Leblanc are in the Museum of Montanban which gives some idea of the joy Ingres must have had in painting this beautiful woman. The hands alone he drew over and over and no wonder, for they are as expressive as her face. Ingres painted these portraits in 1822 and 1823, when he was in France after a stay of fourteen years in Rome. Still unrecognized by his own country he nevertheless was producing works far more worthy of future recognition than those of his critics. In fact even the names of many of the latter are forgotten and their works are fit only for the scrap heap. While Ingres was not great in the use of his brush yet few artists have been so con-

sistent in adhering to definite principles in reproducing natural objects. This quality of mind shines forth in his portraits and simpler pictures in a personal style that is most alluring. We feel a sense of personal charm clinging not only to Madame Leblanc but to the artist who has given us a continuing remembrance of the fascinating lady.

There is no question but that "La Source," Louvre (Fig. 49), is Ingres' masterpiece. No one can pass through the connecting room between the "Victory" on the stairs and the Carré gallery without lingering before this exquisite painting. No wonder criticism against Ingres collapsed when it was exhibited in Paris. One hopes that the critics still had sufficient honour to acknowledge that the rejected one had produced a master work. But the hypercritical die hard. An amusing incident occurred just a few years ago in a large western city. A second-class postmaster held up an art magazine because of a reproduction of "La Source," stating that nude figures were prohibited in the mail. It took the Washington authorities and many press comments to convince the would be reformer that this particular nude had been sanctioned for nearly a hundred years—he evidently had just heard of it.

Ingres has brought the sister arts, painting and

sculpture, in very close communion in this picture. Caught as it were centuries ago in the virgin marble, this child of nature full of dignity and grace has waited for Ingres to release her from the cold grasp of the stone with his life-giving brush. How intimately she fits into the niche! The little plant feels her living presence as its tiny flowers nod approvingly at her feet. Even the austere grey rock gives a sense of protection while the pouring water from the emptying urn adds its testimony of purity as it sparkles in the limpid pool. Study the face for a moment and try to understand wherein Ingres' insight penetrates the superficial into the very soul of innocence.

Thus at seventy-six Ingres had honours thrust upon him until his death eleven years later. Art Academies of every country and state simply deluged him with special appointments. He is buried in Père-lachaise where, even in the crowded city of the dead, his isolation from contemporary artists is proverbial. I know of no place so big with the spirit of the living dead as Père-lachaise. Visit it if possible.

If the gift to paint increased in proportion to inheritance surely Emile Jean Horace Vernet (1789-1863) ought to have been a master with the brush, for he was the third generation of



FIG. 50.—Preparing for the Races. Vernet. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

Vernet painters. However this is not a law of nature and Horace became just what he was himself, a painter standing apart. Not that his isolation argued a great genius to be reckoned with ever after, not at all. But when he struck the note of popularity with military people through his battle scenes—Versailles is full of them—he gave a new version of war. This he could do for the greater part of his own early life was spent in camp. The tap of a drum never failed to give him thrills of patriotic emotion. Later he turned to Arab scenes—really genre pictures—which attracted the general public. Neither of these subjects encroached upon the classicism of David nor the rebellious assertions of Ingres so he went his own way unmolested.

One could scarcely look upon his battle scenes as great works of art yet they do serve to visualize the historic struggles of the French, to coming generations. We feel that he is convincing and interesting in many of his smaller canvases. For instance in "Preparing for the Races," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 50), he has aroused the excited expectancy that comes so naturally to both horse and rider at such a time. Even the accident of the thrown jockey intensifies the feeling of tenderness in the preliminary manoeuvres. In a measure this growing

excitement in man and horses offsets the lack of warmth in colour and harmony in design. It is a pity that Vernet had so little feeling for colour in dealing with the colourful Arab.

Vernet is buried in Montmartre Cemetery—second cemetery in size to Père-lachaise—where are many kindred spirits in art, as Ary Scheffer, Ernest Renan, Alexander Dumas, fils, Berlioz, etc. This is another spot filled with the presence of great spirits.

CHAPTER VIII

GÉRICAUT—DELACROIX—DELAROCHE

WHAT a wonderful inheritance is ours when an artist paints for the world a portrait of his mother. We somehow get at the fountain head of the man's own worth. And when that "Portrait of the Artist's Mother," Brooklyn Museum, (Fig. 51), grips us as Jean Louis Géricault's (1791-1824) does you may believe that the son himself has something unusual in him. As we look into that mother's face we can readily believe that the son was capable of starting the Romantic movement in France and not simply abetting what was already set in motion. I am sure that nothing would deter this mother from advocating what she considered the right course and her judgment of that course would be sane and wholesome. Look at that balanced face! The stubborn chin has the far seeing, merry eyes to keep it from being dogmatic and the determined nose is guided by the active, penetrating brain. That mother can smile and chide and her counsel would be helpful to any

young son or daughter however highly gifted by nature.

Certainly when Géricault painted "The Raft of the Medusa," Louvre (Fig. 52), he startled thinking France out of its usual self. Among the artists a storm was started that has been gathering force ever since. The conservatives were simply beside themselves with rage and the young men grinned with delight. Here was this callow art student daring to paint a real scene and call it art! What was the art world coming to? Then his unprecedented method of working up the subject! Think of going to real life and watching the death struggles of real people.

The terrible reality of the wreck so filled the soul of the young painter that he took a studio near a hospital where he might know first hand the contortions of the human body under the strain of mental and physical pain. And to still further enhance the vividness of the scene he hunted up the only survivor of the Medusa, the ship's carpenter, and had him build an exact duplicate of the raft. The strivings of those perishing souls are so full of the agonies of death that one shudders with real horror. Of course the scene is not a pleasant one but it is so vitally true that art was lifted out of the dead formal-



FIG. 51.—Portrait of the Artist's Mother. Géricault. Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.

ties of David and his followers into pulsating power—a power that is slowly permeating every civilized people.

Unfortunately Géricault did not live—he died when only thirty-three—to see how his temerity was the entering wedge that split asunder the man-formed rules of art. This new movement was called romantic as opposed to classic yet neither term describes the true meaning of the two factions. So called classic art as it existed in France was far from being a model of excellence accepted as a standard of value, for the classic spirit was dead and what remained was cold formalism, while in the romantic movement we feel the spirit of the great masters stirring again. In fact the awakening of the individual souls of these new seekers after truth revealed to them that the spirit of true art was always classic. Art is never haphazard; its principles are laid down in nature and to go back to nature to learn these principles is to give life to a work of art. This is far from copying nature—for a copy is as dead as a classic French work—it is building up a scene so true in all its parts that, as Whistler remarked sarcastically, “Nature is looking up a bit!” which is true romanticism. Art is not nature yet she never sins against her.

Though Géricault died just as the conflict

began he left a good fighter in his contemporary Ferdinand Victor Eugène Delacroix (1799-1863). When the "Massacre of Scio," Louvre (Fig. 53), was exhibited the furor for and against Delacroix was even greater than over "The Raft of the Medusa." Even Baron Gros went so far as to call it "the massacre of art," which was a crushing criticism as Gros himself had held out against David and his clique, only to be overruled at last, and submitted to more criticism himself.

However, Delacroix was too thoroughly convinced that he was right to be thwarted or turned aside. That a man so young could shake the very foundation from under the artists of the day was unthinkable yet he did it. They condemned the scene of bloodshed and horror but they must have felt the spirit of murder that the Turk was spreading over the fair isles of Greece. Although Delacroix had not been in the Orient when he painted this picture, his sensitive appreciation of the colour tones necessary to express various emotions was so keen that not a false note mars the reality of the scene. But the very fury of the colour-drenched brush seems to arouse the classicists to greater indignation, yet to-day, says Theophile Gautier, "The Massacre of Scio has become classic in its turn;



FIG. 52.—Raft of the Medusa. Géricault.
Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 53.—Massacre of Scio. Delacroix.
Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 54.—Portrait of Chopin. Delacroix.

we copy it, we study it, we admire it. It is the Orient and its cruelty in man and nature: pest and murderer."

It is not surprising with Delacroix's great love for music that he should have known Frederick Chopin personally. This intimacy with the great musician was probably during the years when George Sand was making her "psychological" study in her infatuation for Chopin. Whether Delacroix made this "Drawing from Life of Chopin" (Fig. 54) while George Sand was saying of the great musician, "The delicacy of his constitution rendered him interesting in the eyes of women," or after she grew tired of her plaything when he was to her a "high-flown consumptive, an exasperating nuisance!" we do not know. But judging from the expression of the sombre face with its pitiful look in the eyes we believe it must have been after the break. Naturally these two sensitive natures, Chopin and Delacroix, warmed under the approving words of the brilliant woman. Chopin believed George Sand was sincere in saying to him, "The full yet graceful cultivation of his mind, the sweet and captivating originality of his conversation, gained for him the attention of the cleverest men; while the less cultivated liked him for the exquisite courtesy of his manner." She probably was sin-

cere when she said it but alas, the fickleness of woman! George Sand's praise of Delacroix was no less full only he was never her lover so the praise was allowed to pass unchallenged. What she said truly describes the artist. "Delacroix is a complete artist. He feels and understands music in a manner so superior that it would have made him a great musician had he not chosen rather to be a great painter. He is an equally good judge of literature; few minds are so accomplished and clear as his."

Delacroix's career was one of hard work. He devoted his life to his art with very little society and few intimate friends. He never married for his art filled his heart and he felt nothing should interfere with his devotion to it. Though physically frail his tense nervous system held him at high pressure until the last few years of his life. The character of his compositions tell plainer than words the strain under which he worked for he lived each scene as he painted it.

As we look at the "Abduction of Rebecca," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 55), so intense is the action that the whole scene of the burning castle of Front de Boeuf and Bois Guilbert's making off with Rebecca thrills us as when we read the story of *Ivanhoe*. Rebecca is specially interesting to us for the original, Rebecca



FIG. 55.—Abduction of Rebecca. Delacroix. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

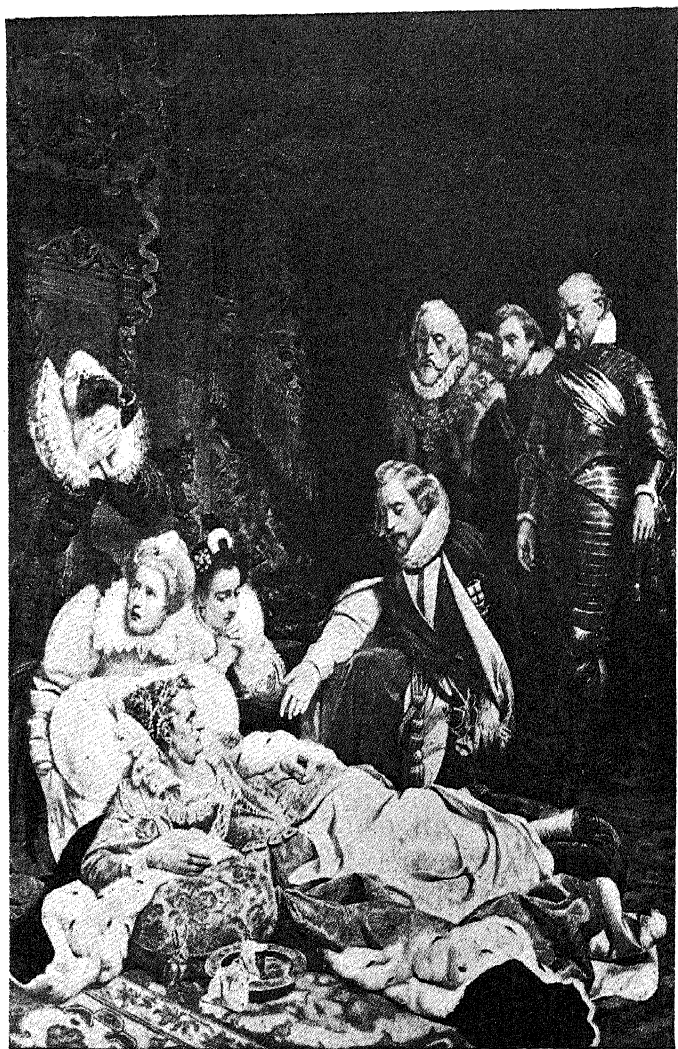


FIG. 56.—Death of Queen Elizabeth. Delaroche. Louvre, Paris.

Gratz, was a young Philadelphia Jewess whom Washington Irving knew and whose character he described to Sir Walter Scott. Rebecca Gratz is buried in a little church yard in the Quaker city.

Delacroix spent some time in Morocco on a diplomatic mission and while there made many sketches of Arabs which served as suggestions in his many oriental pictures. Then, too, his passionate love of colour responded tremendously to the colour-soaked richness of northern Africa. And his nature, also, responded intelligently to the lavish abundance of sun-kissed objects because of the years of careful study of the colour scheme of the Venetian artists, especially Veronese. It was said of him that at the beginning of his career he spent weeks and months on a ladder before Veronese's "Marriage at Cana," in the Carré Gallery, Louvre. There he absorbed the rare colour sense of that great master. Delacroix fairly lived colour so no wonder his canvases throb and glow with colour radiance.

If Hippolyte (Paul) Delaroche (1797-1856) had been as big as was his desire to break away from the special schools of the classic and romantic and still reserve the best from all art, he would have been a genius and a master, as it was he simply started the eclectic movement in France.

Raphael three hundred years before him gathered the best but he passed that best through his own marvellous personality and produced masterpieces for all time. Delaroche stood alone in his attempt to retain the good without falling into the mannerisms of the weaker men of the two factions but he failed in originality in adapting the best he advocated. His portrayal of historic events was very popular with the public for he was a good story teller. Bible scenes became real events and high lights in past history lived again under his brush. He drew well, his arrangement was good, his colour was pleasing and his treatment was historically correct—in fact the principle on which he founded his eclectic school was sound but he gave no personal element from his own mental laboratory to individualize it.

When Delaroche was thirty years old he painted "The Death of Queen Elizabeth (1603)," Louvre (Fig. 56). Poor Queen, she ruled all powers but Death! And now as Death beckons she turns to her court sycophants but not a spark of love or sympathy can she demand. The old days of her power and glory are gone and those who await her death are angling for favours under the coming ruler. Delaroche has chosen the historic moment in the last hours of Elizabeth of England when Lord Robert Cecil, insisting

that she must go to bed, rouses the queen to fury by the word "must." She cries, "Must! is *must* a word to be addressed to princes? Little man, little man! thy father, if he had been alive, durst not have used that word." Then her passion dies out like an exhausted fire brand and she murmurs, "Thou art so presumptuous, because thou knowest I shall die." Delaroche has preserved the spirit of that historic period, and in the tragic figure of the defeated queen sums up the strength and weakness of her powerful personality.

In no other historic scene has he given anything so charming as the figure of the sixteen years old martyr in "The Execution of Lady Jane Gray," Wallace Gallery, London (Fig. 57). Curiously he was wont to choose the most lugubrious subjects out of a period when tragedy and comedy made lightning changes as easily as a face under a skillful caricaturist. In the death scene of Queen Elizabeth Delaroche just escaped making a caricature of the old queen, but his Lady Jane Gray is a being of exquisite grace and beauty. Not even the too prominent implements used in perpetrating the hideous crime against the innocent victim can detract from the artistic charm of the lovely girl.

In working out the single figures, seventy-five

of them, from the various epochs in his "Hemicycle," Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, Delaroche has shown a wonderful constancy of purpose in execution. The painting commemorates painting, sculpture and architecture from Pericles, the fourth century B. C., to Louis XIV. At the lower front of the central group is "The Genius of the Arts" (Fig. 58), a charming nude figure distributing laural wreaths to crown the heads of those who have joined the immortals. The finished study for the "Hemicycle," entirely by Delaroche, is one of the rare treasures of the Walters Gallery, Baltimore. Almost destroyed by fire, it was restored by other hands. As a piece of decorative art the work is worthy of the highest praise. It is done on a strip of canvas only four inches wide and of the seventy and more heads in a row no two are on the same level. The figures have every conceivable pose and gesture with costumes varied in colour and drapery. The tall, beautiful woman with a citron green and light buff robe and pale lavender underdress standing on a lower step with a model of a Gothic church, is Delaroche's wife, the daughter of Horace Vernet (see page 82). Of Delaroche's pupils Jean François Millet stands alone as a master.



FIG. 57.—Execution of Lady Jane Gray. Delaroche. Wallace Museum, London.



FIG. 58.—Single Figure from Hemicycle. Delaroche. École des Beaux Arts, Paris.

CHAPTER IX

DECAMPS—FROMENTIN—ZIEM—ISABEY

ALEXANDER GABRIEL DECAMPS (1803-1860) used to say that he was "Born on the third day of the third month of the third year of the century," then he would add, whimsically, "That was the only remarkable thing about my childhood." He did say, however, when he was sent to school and made to study Latin and his own language that he "resembled a young fox tied by the neck to the leg of a chair." This last remark is an index to Decamps' character as a man and an artist. Impatient of restraint he soon broke away from all conventional teaching. While he spent a little time with various artists and in the regular studio, they one and all bored him. He took matters in his own hands and young as he was began to record little scenes from his own boyhood when like a young fox, he used to wander alone through fields and woods. At once these small pictures captivated the public but they did not satisfy Decamps. Like many of his contemporaries the lure of the Orient called

him. There the wild picturesque life of the Arab fascinated him and the rich luxuriance of the Turk fired his brain with subjects and local colour.

In "The Night Patrol at Smyrna," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 59), the rule of the Turk is felt in every line yet never for a moment has he lost the spell of colour, of light, of atmosphere, in that land of rugs and figs and opium. These gorgeous low toned Turkish guards, led by their officer on his splendid white horse, dash through the narrow city street with all the impetuosity of a real need for immediate action. And yet how we are held captive by the brilliant sunlight on the golden cream plastered wall and the glorious rug hanging from the Moorish balcony above. Then the strip of blue sky at the end of the narrow street at the left,—how it calls us! It is the mystery of the Orient that beckons. Wonderful Smyrna! filled with Homer—his birthplace, with the Ionian League, with St. John's Revelation to the Seven Churches, with its all but total annihilation and rebuilding—little wonder that the impetuous Decamps felt your charm.

Children must have been specially delightful to Decamps, and certainly no artist had more intimate knowledge of the restless, inquisitive, unheeding child of early school age than he. His

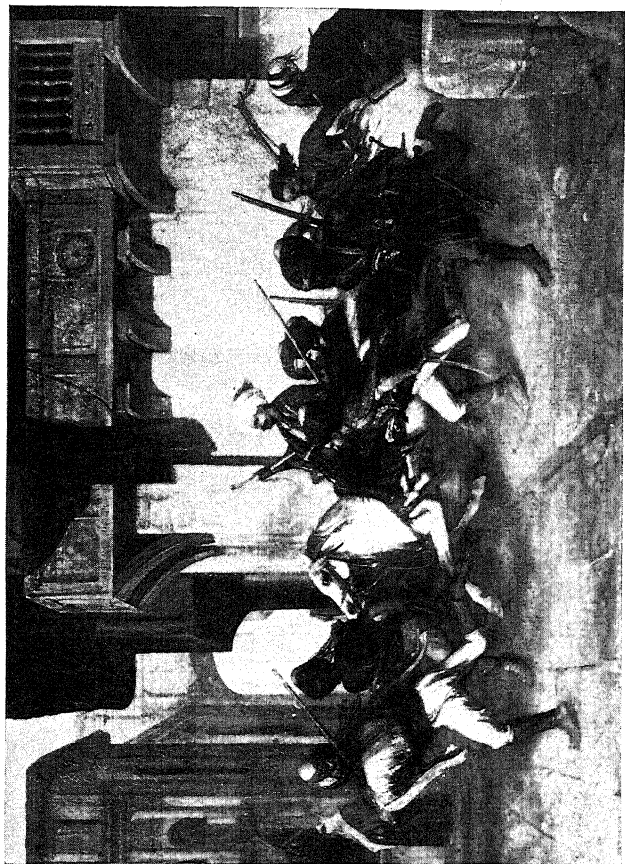


FIG. 59.—The Night Patrol. Decamps. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

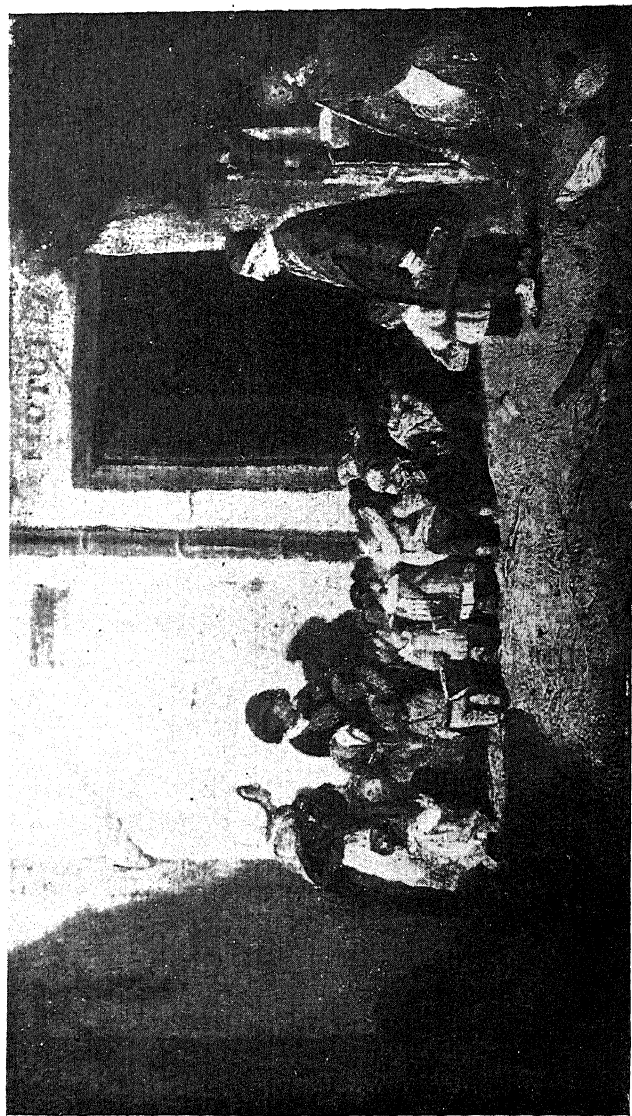


FIG. 60.—Schooltime. Decamps. Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

pictures of schools, east or west, are accurate records of growing young human animals. One feels in the collected children the muscular impulse to stretch, to twist, to turn, to be constantly on the move that is a part of all growing creation. And we feel just as strongly the guiding power of authority in each group. This little band of eager pupils, in "Schooltime," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 60), entering the doorway of knowledge, is repeating its impulse to learn since the beginnings of civilization until now. It was Decamps, however, who saw the picture value of a huddled crowd of school children. The lights and shades of a glaring Eastern day became a wonderful revealer of colour and design in his hands. Each child is a precious bit in a mosaic framed in crude weather-beaten surroundings. The whole is a delightful picture interesting alike to young and old.

Another specially attractive picture is his "Eastern School" at Chantilly. Decamps never came up to the ideals he had set for himself. He realized too late that his own method of training was not equal to continuous early study under direction. Restless under his limitations he constantly changed his methods, at times pleasing the public and again as he came nearer his own ideals, at variance with it.

Decamps has touched the cord that vibrates in the heart of all humanity in "The Foundling," Luxembourg, Paris (Fig. 61). How elemental the appeal of that wee one with its little arms stretched out for help. And how simple the picture is. Only a tiny baby in swaddling clothes lying on a stone step—yet it is a universal story. Every nation and all time is included in that deserted bit of humanity. But for the accident that ended Decamps' life prematurely—he was thrown against a tree in the Forest of Fontainebleau—he no doubt would have continued to develop a still stronger art in the quiet, soothing atmosphere of Barbizon where he had made his home.

George Sand gives a vivid word picture of Eugene Fromentin (1820-1876) when she describes him as "small and delicately constituted: his face striking in its expression; his eyes magnificent." And then she reveals his character as a man and artist. She continues, "His conversation like his paintings and writings—brilliant and strong, solid, coloured, full. One could listen to him all one's life. Happy those who live in the intimacy of this man, exquisite in every respect." Fromentin with these graces of body and mind, used these talents in that sane and proper manner that encountered little oppo-



FIG. 61.—The Foundling. Decamps. Luxembourg, Paris.

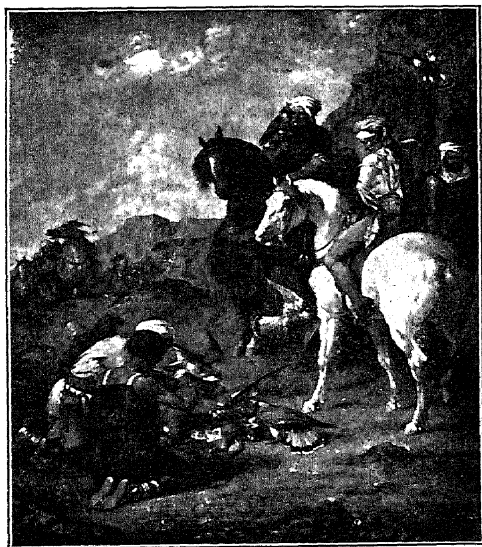


FIG. 62.—The Falcon Hunt. Fromentin. Louvre, Paris.

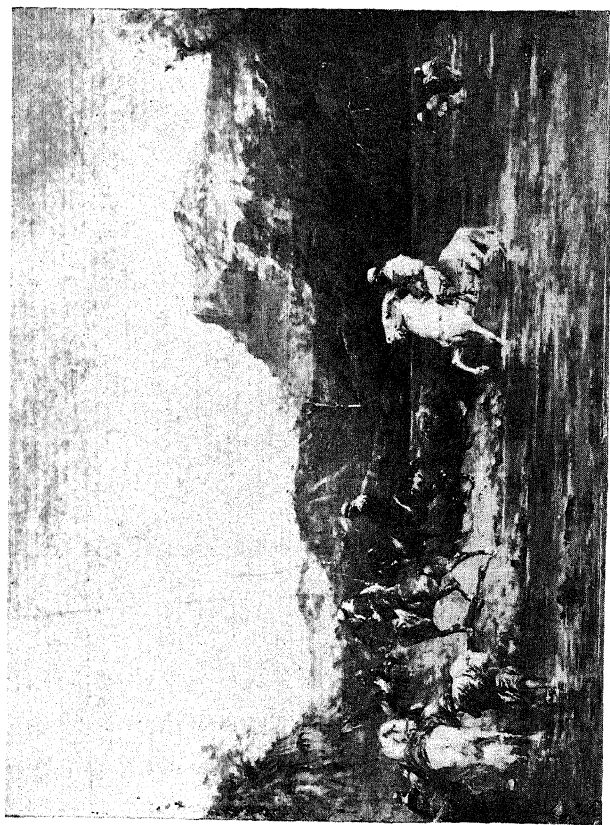


FIG. 63.—Arabs Crossing a Ford. Fromentin. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

sition but on the other hand which, from lack of vigorous individuality, kept him from leaving any special impression with his painting. His oriental scenes, however, speak the language of the Arab; no one could mistake one of his pictures of the sensitive four-footed friend, the horse, so dear to the Arab's heart. In the "Falcon Hunt," Louvre (Fig. 62), those splendid animals appreciate the success of the hunt quite as much as their masters. The eager tension of the beautiful heads show the understanding of centuries of association with the masters of the desert. And see what a vital part of the scene are the birds. A very tender bond of affection is that of the falcon and the falconer. See how caressingly the man on the black horse holds the bird and how closely the falcon presses against his cheek. Fromentin knew how to center the interest on the hunters and their horses and falcons rather than on the prey. Then, too, he has enveloped that wild, craggy scene with an atmosphere palpitating with life.

As we turn to "The Arabs Crossing a Ford," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 63), again the charm of the Orient envelops the scene. Even so simple an incident as crossing a ford has an element of dignity among these people of desert freedom. Centuries of roaming at will over a

land unmolested by civilization has engendered in man and beast an attitude of body and mind inductive of masterhood. Fromentin, with sensitive appreciation of the colourful tones of reddish-brown in bush and rock, and the answering grey-blue of stream and sky has given a sense of elation to the scene as if we, too, had been freshened by the splash of the water. The quiver of life is over all.

And again in the "Arab Camp," Louvre (Fig. 64), Fromentin gives the intimate and harmonious note of one who would not be an intruder among these creatures of nature. These horses might well stand for any fabled prodigies. Even Pegasus could not have been more beautiful or the horses of Achilles more intelligent.

Fromentin was a writer and a painter sensitive to life principles. Nothing was dead matter to him for all was a part of the living, throbbing whole. He had no patience with surface imitation—the affecting of eastern ways even to costumes and manners of speech was foreign to him. His love of the East was a genuine joy in the wild untrammelled inhabitant and the sunbleached earth with its strange vegetation. His poetic nature vibrates to the varying colour and light and atmosphere revealing and conceal-



FIG. 64.—Arab Camp. Fromentin. Louvre, Paris.

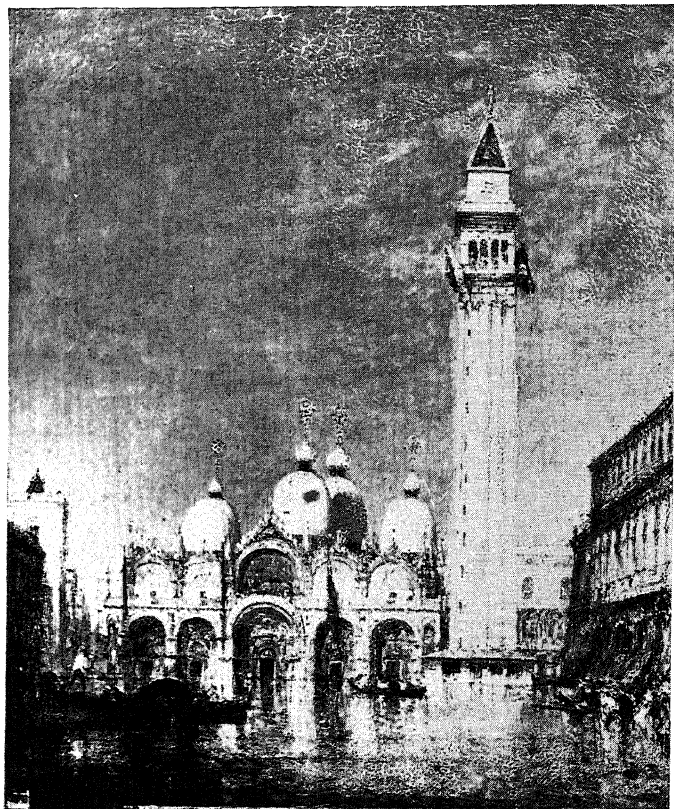


FIG. 65.—An Inundation of the Piazza of San Marco. Ziem. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

ing the actions and intents of the people. His pictures speak frankly of common occurrences and are veritable genre scenes yet always one feels a certain mystery enveloping those turbaned figures. Even his portrayal of the loving understanding existing between the Arab and his horse seems to have an occult element in it. Of all the orientalist Fromentin's subtle insight of the spirit of the East never sounds a false note.

Fromentin was born at La Rochelle, on the south-west coast of France—that historic city so intimately interwoven with the great events moulding the French people. Only five years later (1825) Bouguereau (see page 204) first saw the light in the same city, but very unlike were these two artists in life history and artistic career.

Perhaps, if we could make a class of the French artists who looked eastward for subjects, we might say Felix Ziem (1821-1911) has given the clearest picture of Byzantine architecture in Venice and Constantinople. His whole being was saturated with the varied aspects of these cities under the morning and evening lights. All these men were colourists and naturally they were fascinated in this sun-kissed country with its iridescent quality of weather worn stone

and wood and metal and the changing radiance of the water under the hanging dew, the whispering breezes and sapphire sky.

Ziem's Venetian scenes almost out—Venetian Venice in their splendour. He robes the bewitching queen of the Adriatic in garments fitting every mood of the changing hours. He brings her suitors from every port clothed in gaily-tinted robes that swell in the breeze as they lay at anchor at her feet. He even notes a special caprice of her restless subject, usually held at bay, when its pleasure was "An Inundation of the Piazza of San Marco," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 65). This was a daring act for the Adriatic to break its bounds but not an unnatural one. The bond that binds this ever moving water to the restless, high strung beings resting on its bosom is so close that little wonder liberty slips into license at the least provocation. It is really a small matter, however, for the long nosed gondola readily pokes its nose a little closer to its queen. Ziem preserves all the glory of the varied tints of San Marco, the Campanile, and the Doges Palace under the storm-brewing grey-blue of the sky—in fact no passing fury of rain-storm or wind cloud could rob Venice of its colour.

Eugene Louis-Gabriel Isabey (1804-1886) was born in Paris under most favourable condi-



FIG. 66.—Street Scene in Algiers. Isabey. Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.

tions to develop his predilection to art as his father was a noted miniaturist under Napoleon. He had the love of colour that marked those men who sought the Orient and, fortunately for him, was sent to Algiers in 1830 as royal marine painter. There is much in this "Street Scene," Brooklyn Museum (Fig 66), that suggests Algeria. The old dilapidated houses, their acute-gables serrated against the sky, quiver and glow in the hot luminous air like great semi-precious stones under the blazing sun of Africa. That narrow passage-way leads into uncanny byways full of the mystery of the Arab. But Isabey never quite lived up to his early promise. We wonder why when we look into his face as Gérard painted it for us (see Fig. 39). Possibly the public accepted him too quickly because of his father's standing. Early success seems to have dwarfed his power for progressive work and what his first paintings promised never came to fruition. He painted many historic and marine pictures.

CHAPTER X

GÉRÔME—T. FRÈRE—BIDA

THE eminent French critic Gautier, wrote in 1847, of the birth of Jean Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), "Let us mark with white this lucky year, for unto us a painter is born. He is called Gérôme. I tell you his name today, and tomorrow it will be celebrated."

This "Boy of the Bishari Tribe," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 67), painted by Gérôme interests us exceedingly for he stands as a representative of Ham, the son of Noah. His country lies between the Nile and the Red Sea with soil so black that it gave the name Ham (meaning black soil) to the inhabitants. In the Bible these people were called Cushites and Herodotus refers to them as Ethiopians. Gérôme's picture is one of those fine portraits of his own where he reveals individual traits through his intellectual understanding of racial characteristics. Nothing could be finer in physique than this dark skinned boy. He firmly grasps the cross-hilt of his sword yet carelessly throws his right arm over his shield. This detached figure

is probably one of a band of young marauders ready to spring into action at the least sign from the leader. Never did Gérôme paint a finer bit of genre than this young giant. He might well be a descendant of "Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord," only this hunter has degenerated into a plunderer of man. And note how Gérôme preserves the dominant features of the race yet shows the modifying quality gained by contact with the Egyptian. And how true is his estimate of modifying influences when race predilections intervene.

Gérôme never fails to picture minutely every detail with almost photographic exactness. This exactness many times detracts from the bigness of the theme he has conceived. It is almost impossible to get away from the multiplicity of material things employed in materializing the scene. We all vaguely understand that in life a vast amount of specialized skill is necessary to produce an agreeable effect but somehow we rebel when we are compelled to take notice of it—and that is just what Gérôme forces us to do. The details are beautifully and daintily expressed—in fact so accurate are they that each process can be traced. But by no stretch of the imagination could Gérôme's careful and accurate rendering of arabesque and tapestry be placed by the side of

the "Little Dutch Masters." One is troubled about many things and the other is big in small things.

As we study Gérôme's "Prayers in the Mosque of Amrou, Old Cairo," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 68), we are at once impressed with his profound knowledge of humanity. Even when that humanity is all Moslem. This company of worshippers gathered with one accord to honour God and his prophet, Mohammed, is as diverse as an American crowd. In the foreground standing on the oriental rug is a musselman—meaning a professor of submission to the faith—an orthodox Mohammedan with a red velvet robe and yellow silk under-sleeves. The rug with its red centre and two borders, figured black and yellow, is spread with pointed prayer end facing Mecca. The row upon row of Turks are facing toward Mecca in the first attitude of prayer—they stand, they bow low, they kneel with face touching the floor. The Mohammedan's robes are mostly bright coloured with white turbans. Note the nude boy just back in the middle distance. Is it not our Boy of the Bischari tribe? The Turk and the Arab, the Egyptian and the son of Ham all come together at the muezzin's call to prayer. The Mosque of Amrou is the oldest religious building in Cairo. It was built by the

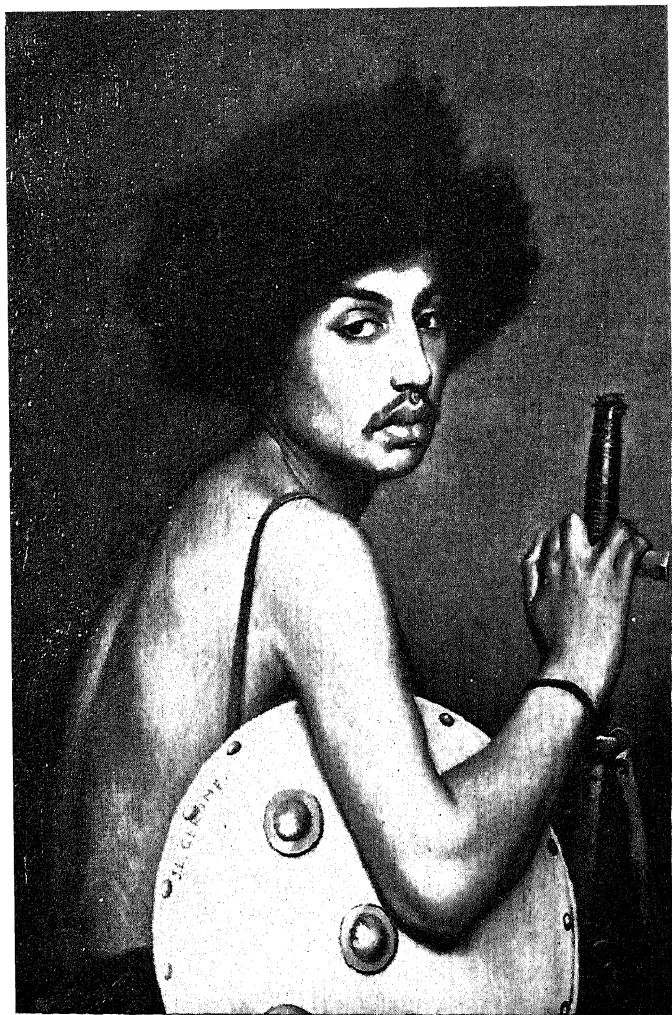


FIG. 67.—Boy of the Bischari Tribe. Gérôme. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 68.—Prayer in the Mosque Amrou, Old Cairo. Gérôme. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

Mohammedans about 622 A. D.—the first century of Hegira.

Gérôme, true to his literary instincts, pictures this scene with a historic accuracy. It emphasizes the claim of the prophet on all his followers to the end of time. Certainly the French oriental artists with their historical knowledge and keen sense of artistic values were pioneers in showing the western world the power of the Turk under the teaching of Mohammed. The pity is that we have profited so little. More than a hundred years ago they began picturing incidents and episodes from the daily life of the peoples along the Nile and in Constantinople, in Palestine and the near East. These scenes represent almost every phase of racial characteristics and had we been wise many a lesson could have been learned and many a blunder saved.

The versatility of Gérôme led him into almost every school of painting; and his wide knowledge and extensive travel gave him an unlimited choice of subjects. His literary interpretation in "Pollice Verso," (Fig. 69), has accurately reproduced a form of gladiatorial contest at Rome. Not the least emotion sways that crowd of spectators. Really the turned down thumb of historic significance is the only indication of vital interest in the vanquished one—the "Pollice Verso" warns

the gladiator not to kill the fallen one. Gérôme's tragic scenes, no matter how ghastly, have no more human element than has the puffing engine after mangling its passengers.

Gérôme was an artist of many parts. He understood his theme; he was master of his tools; he never erred in historic value; he held the interest with his varied subjects; he was cool, collected, masterful, yet he never swayed the judgment or warmed the heart. Surely his correct drawing, good colour, and interesting subjects ought to have made him a master but masters are not made: they are born.

Was ever a composition more carefully arranged to express the significance of the times than "L'Eminence Gris," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Fig. 70). The stage setting is Louis XIII on the throne of France (1625-1643) and Cardinal Richelieu, his prime minister, enlarging the king's domain in every direction. Père Joseph, "L'Eminence Gris," is confidential adviser and secret secretary to the cardinal; and the court, ready to make capital of the least scrap of information, is on the alert. The character of "L'Eminence Gris" (His Gray Eminence) is expressed in every line of the tall figure garbed as a monk. Standing at the turn of the palace stairway he sees to a nicety, without raising his

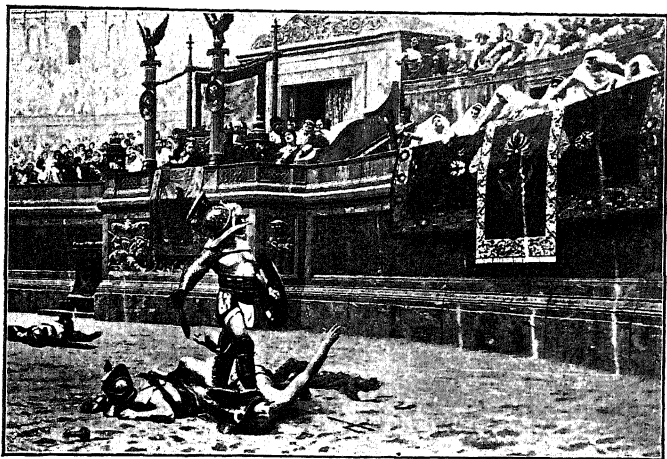


FIG. 69.—Pollice Verso. Gérôme.

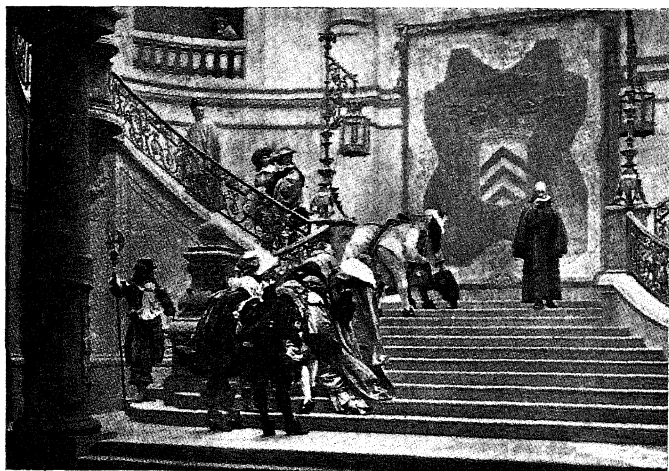


FIG. 70.—L'Eminence Gris. Gérôme. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass.

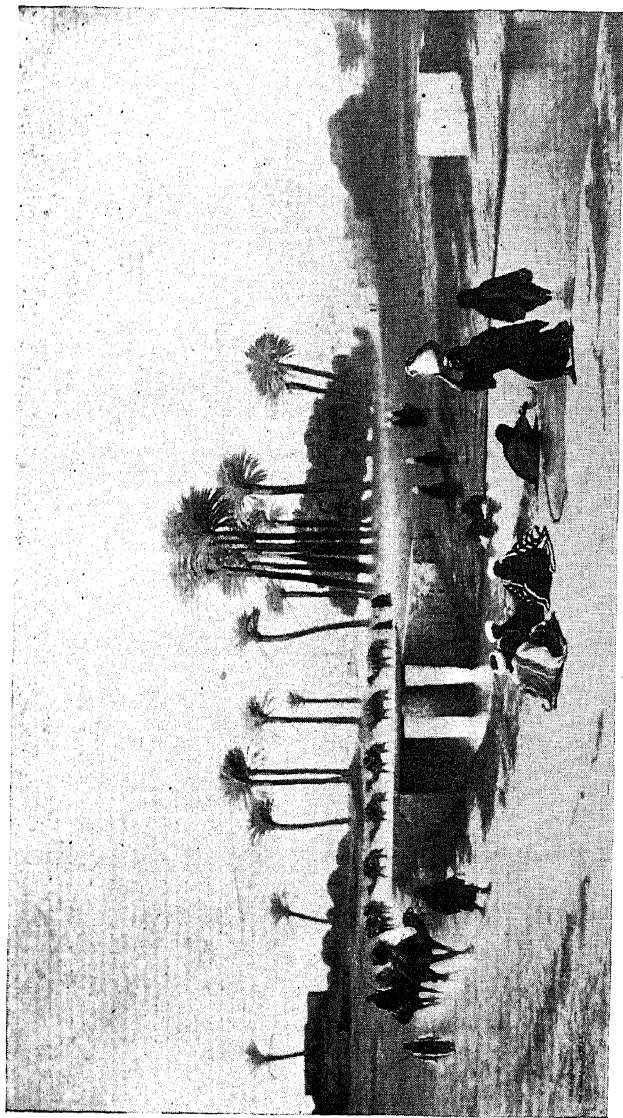


FIG. 71.—Cairo; Evening. Frère. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

eyes from his prayer-book, the exact degree of humility in the obeisance of the assembling church dignitaries and court nobles. No movement is lost on this sagacious, astute man—and well that bowing train knows the advisability of outward reverence. Now why did not Gérôme refrain from noting every button, feather, shoe latchet and glistening cloak? And why need he pick out every iron leaf and scroll in the stair banister and a multitude of other details too numerous to mention? The subject is tremendous in import and as simple as tremendous. The apparently oblivious L'Eminence Gris standing alone and the obsequious train saluting hold the attention with all the fascination of a real occurrence.

It scarcely seems possible that both Gérôme and Millet (see pages 104 and 122) studied under Delaroche (see page 91). Few of Gérôme's pupils followed his methods of painting, yet his careful teaching in drawing has been of inestimable value to artists all over the world.

Not often two of the same family gain distinction yet the two brothers, Charles Théodore Frère (1815-1888) and Pierre Edouard Frère (1819-1886) were artists of considerable merit. Théodore, the elder, was another orientalist. He not only enters into the spirit of the eastern peo-

ple but pictures their camels with comradely warmth only possible to one who knew them well—and to know that wise ship of the desert is knowledge indeed. The fascination of that line of camels in "Cairo; Evening," by Théodore Frère, Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 7), gets into the blood. But the whole scene is wonderfully well managed. Look at the low lying dust keeping in close touch with the swaying train as if protesting at being disturbed. See with what dignity the women balance their water jars on their heads; they are fit companions for the stately palms along their path. Wonderfully harmonious are those long black robes and tall yellow-grey jars with the luminous sand and glistening water. Was ever a city bathed in a more glorious light! A yellow pink radiance exalts minaret and gilded dome, marble palace and secluded roof-garden. Surely the New Jerusalem could scarcely shine with greater glory than does this city of Cairo under the long rays of the setting sun. This is a view to sigh for if it has not been a reality and to rejoice in if it brings back the real.

Now turn to "Jerusalem from the Environs," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 72), for the oriental atmosphere of Arabs and tents and



FIG. 72.—Environs of Jerusalem. Frère. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 73.—Massacre of the Mamelukes. Bida. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

camels. Naturally our eyes travel along rolling mountains up to Jerusalem set on a hill in the distance. The spell of "Behold we go up to Jerusalem" envelops the scene. That familiar group in the foreground has probably been gathering in that particular spot for forty centuries, never changing in costumes or customs, yet ever varying in individual thoughts and manners. We owe an inestimable debt to these French artists who have brought us in such close touch with the spirit of the near East. Their sympathetic understanding of the sacredness of ancient rites and ceremonies is brought out again and again in their pictures. These scenes do not necessarily indicate that a religious significance was intended by the artist but it was impossible to represent these people without that element entering in.

When Alexander Bida (1813-1895) began to paint oriental subjects he showed how deeply he had studied the religious side of the people. His marvellous set of drawings illustrating the Bible are among our greatest treasures in illuminating religious oriental customs to us. While he was in the Orient studying and travelling Gérôme (see page 104), who was his close friend, was often his companion. One day he showed Gérôme the drawing he had made of "Prayer on

the Housetop." After a few moments of silent admiration, Gérôme said, "I have done nothing to equal this."

In "The Massacre of the Mamelukes," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 73), we have one of his rare historic scenes that not only arouses interest in the cause of the carnage but thrills with its rich, vivid Cairoese setting. 1811 was the turning point in the history of the Mamelukes—the word means slave. They originally were Turks sold by Genghis Khan to the Egyptian sultan in the thirteenth century. They rapidly gained power in Egypt; established their own government making their chiefs sultans until in 1517 Selim I of Turkey overthrew them and also the Arab rule in Egypt. The Mamelukes then became a part of the Egyptian army as a cavalry corps. In 1811 they plotted secretly to capture the old palace at Cairo and under a false pretext convened at the gate. The plot was discovered and the Mamelukes were nearly exterminated by the soldiers of Mehemmet Ali. Bida has chosen the opening fire of the Albanians as they shoot down from rock and windows the fleeing Mamelukes. Carnage and bloodshed are not pleasant subjects but the artist has so tempered the scene with splendid architectural settings, rich colourful trappings and quivering atmosphere that we are scarcely conscious that it is a massacre.

CHAPTER XI

COROT

IF, on our arrival in Paris, we go at once to the dear little village of Barbizon and wait quietly there for a few days, we surely will feel the spell of the same spirit—the spirit of nature calling—creeping over us that crept over the French art world a hundred years ago. Not every artist at that time was willing to heed the new spirit that was stirring abroad, but those who did heed made that dear little hamlet at the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau the greatest centre of the new creation of art since the Italian Renaissance. But these men who finally crystallized around the Barbizon-Fontainebleau centre were at first part and parcel of the artists we have watched gather and disperse in the ateliers of Paris. These men however, were creative destructors and their protests carried them back to the very fundamentals of art where nature furnished incentive and varied themes. One strange fact was that they all worked individually, not to form a school, but

simply to express themselves. Possibly the incident that brought them together was Constables' exhibition of "The Haywain," in Paris in 1824. When they saw this picture they recognized the elemental undertone of truth which was just the stimulus they needed in crystallizing the 1830 Barbizon-Fontainebleau school.

We class Jean Baptiste Camille Corot (1796-1875) with this school because he drew his inspiration direct from nature though he never broke away from his classic training. "Papa Corot," as he is lovingly called, is a unique figure in French art. I once heard an aged artist say, as he stood before a Corot and Daubigny, "It is a Corot! there is nothing more to be said," and then turning to the Daubigny, he continued, "And this Daubigny—how we love him!" A Corot! who can describe his pictures?

First let us look at "Ville d'Avery," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 74), and in imagination walk through the village and turn in between a break in the line of houses and go down the steps to a fountain facing the tiny lake. There on an old slab, we read, "*Veri diligentia*" (search after truth), and beneath is "Corot, Jean-Baptiste Camille; born at Paris July 26th 1796; died at Paris February 23d 1875." Then opposite the fountain across the lake we will see a sub-

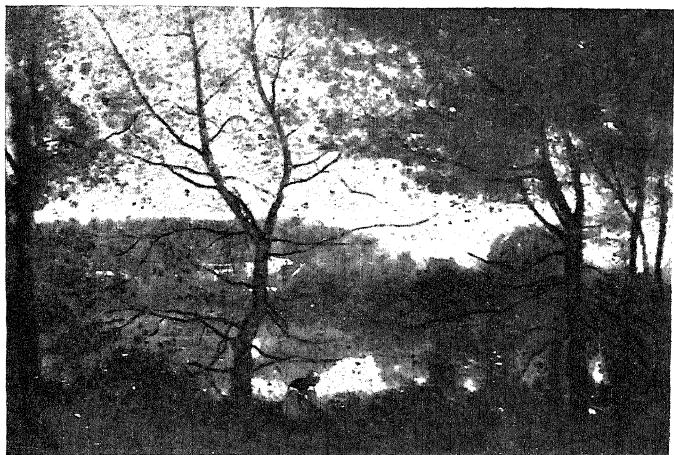


FIG. 74.—Villa d'Avery. Corot. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 75.—Landscape. Corot. Courtesy of the Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

stantial country house, Corot's home, with nothing changed since dear *père* left it.

Now the house nearly hidden across the lake in the picture, becomes a living thing. The spirit of the master is there for it is he who is showing it to us. We are standing by his easel and seeing with his eyes. And what a scene it is! Could we have poetized those straggly trees and the bit of lake mirroring them? Would that white house have been more than a house among the trees if Corot had not gripped us with the mystery of the great soul living in it? And the woman in the foreground—a spot of colour—little did she realize that she, too, was a vital part of Corot. I love to repeat Corot's own story of his spots of colour. He says, "Oh, the beautiful fawn coloured cow! I am going to paint her . . . crack! there she is! Famous, famous!" He sees Simon, a peasant, not daring to approach. He calls him.

"Well, Simon, what do you think of that?" pointing to the cow.

"Oh, well, Monsieur," says Simon, "it's very beautiful, of course!"

"And you see what I meant to paint"; asked Corot.

"Why of course I see what it is," Simon insists, "it's a large yellow rock you've put

there!" This pleased the master but the "yellow rock" is still singing in our hearts.

Corot was past his first youth when he began to paint. In after years he would show his first picture and say to his friends, "It is as young as ever; it marks the hour and the time of day when I did it; but Mademoiselle Rose, who worked at my mother's and who looked at me while at my work, and I, where are we?" The very essence of this painter is everlasting youth. Each morning and each evening was a new creation to him as he sang their praises with ever varying tones. No two were alike yet the same note of joy runs through them all. He was up at dawn to do homage to the first faint tint of the rising sun and worked at night until the last gleam of the setting sun. "Well I must stop," he would say, "my heavenly Father has put out my lamp."

No doubt this "Landscape," Layton Art Gallery (Fig. 75), shows the little lake Corot looked on from his room. Here he would often spend much of the night leaning on the sill of the open window absorbing that mysterious something hanging over land and water curtaining the sky and screening bush and tree. That filmy, mysterious veil glistening with moisture became in these night watches a part of his very soul. He shows his wonderful penetration into the secret



FIG. 76.—Dante and Virgil. Corot. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

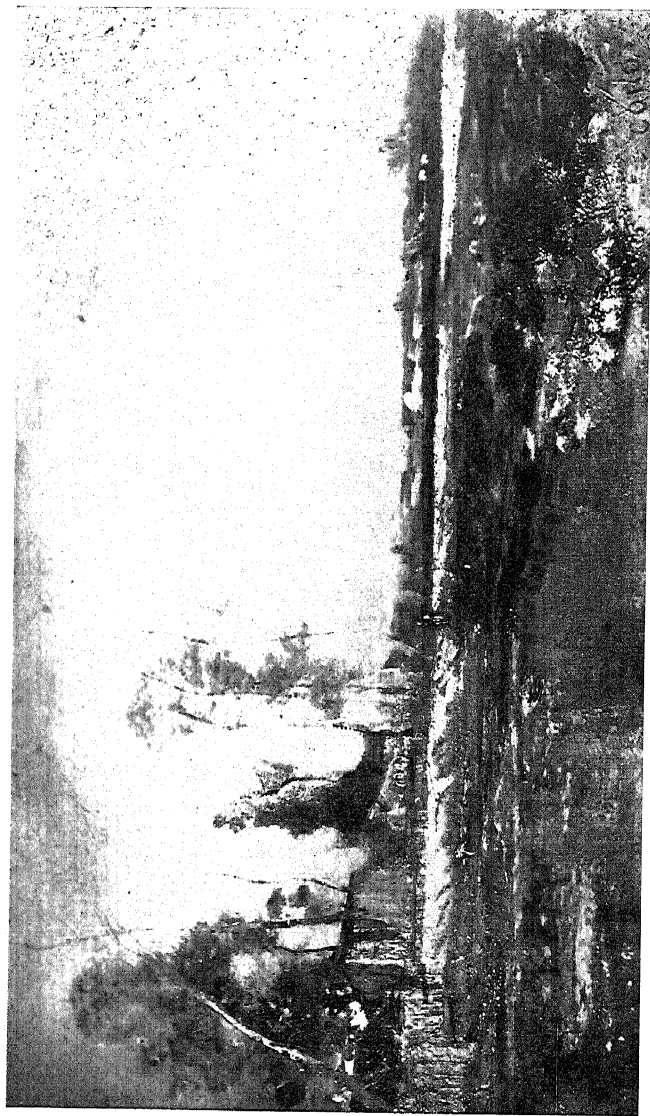


FIG. 77.—Landscape. Corot. Courtesy of the Institute of Art, San Francisco, California.

beginnings of new life in every spring landscape he painted so lovingly. Never has twig and leaf bud been caught in their nascent state more tenderly. The very stretching of birth is upon them as they seem to expand before our very eyes. The gleam of the developing chlorophyll following the ascending sap flashes out at us at every turn and the overhanging grey sky seems to smile complacently for it is good.

While Corot was no reader yet he sometimes drew his subjects from classic story. In "Dante and Virgil," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Fig. 76), it is easy to see that he has followed the text closely. The opening sentence of the *Inferno* gives a vivid word picture of Corot's scene. Dante says,

"Midway upon the journey of our life
I found myself within a forest dark,
For the straightforward pathway had been lost."

Dante wanders all night full of sleep and in the morning comes to the foot of a mountain. He begins to ascend the desert slope but is met by

"A panther light and swift exceedingly."

He thinks to return but

"The time was the beginning of the morning,"
nature is awakening. A lion comes,

"He seems as against me he were coming,
With head uplifted and with ravenous hunger,
And a she-wolf that withall hungerings
Seemed to be laden in ugliness."

Dante gives up the ascent, and says,

"While I was rushing downward to the lowlands,
Before mine eyes did one present himself."

It is Vergil who has come to guide him to his beloved Beatrice. As he says,

With her at my departure I will leave thee."

So much for the classic story but it has taken Corot to picture the early morning light creeping into the sombre forest. Unusual as is the scene for Corot none could portray the glittering film of dewy radiance dispelling the lingering gloom of the night as he alone knows how to do.

It is no assumed mannerism that holds us in Corot's landscapes. His moisture-laden atmosphere is as much a part of them as is the merry glance of his eyes a part of himself. Moisture seems to be the medium through which he passes his own loving nature from the real scene to the ideal one. What could there be of interest in this "Landscape," Institute of Art, San Francisco (Fig. 77), if we had looked at it through our own eyes? Would we have watched that

cluttered up little pond struggling to reflect the feathery trees if it had not been for Corot? Who can define the thing—the essence—that marks a Corot landscape?

Probably the most familiar of all of Corot's landscapes is, "The Dance of the Nymphs," Louvre (Fig. 78). It is not the nymphs that hold us in this picture; they only add a dancing band of colour as of the swaying flowers—again it is Corot himself in his trees. And what a collection! Not great symmetrical oaks but bent, gnarled, broken, dead, nondescript trees; some clothed, others naked! But Corot has touched them and behold, a miracle! A poem in paint—a symphony in colour! Did you ever stop to think how few his colours are? He plays with green until it becomes the most delicate grey and the sombrest black and expresses every tone of growing vegetation. Then he decorates sparingly from the sodium line of the spectrum.

Corot was born of hard-headed, warm-hearted tenacious Normandy extraction which may account for his persistence in holding a narrow range of colour and subject. His simplicity, which provoked much sly humour from his contemporaries—but not so sly as his own—was gained by the most thorough training and a most

conscientious masking of the technical means in attaining results. "I am only a lark, singing little songs in my grey clouds," he would say. Yes, exquisite little songs in which the swaying trees, nodding flowers and sailing clouds still continue to trill in the surrounding grey atmosphere.

Was ever anything more understandable than "Le Lac," Rheims Museum (Fig. 79). It enters our souls and becomes a part of our being. Of course we cannot mistake a Corot yet no two pictures are alike any more than two meetings with an interesting friend are the same. He is never monotonous. How can a creative personality be tiresome? Each approach is from a different point of view. Here are the same trees, and water, and sky yet was that tall, crooked, almost branchless yellow poplar ever so interesting? And that deciduous clump hugging so close together, were ever trees shrouded under a more cooling veil? Even the cows feel its soothing effect.

Yes, Corot was the happy one of the "Pleiades" group. He and Millet never quite understood each other. Corot's undisturbed life kept his outlook placid and serene. He never married and had no family problems to solve and no financial difficulties to unravel. His life was just the op-



FIG. 78.—Dance of the Nymphs. Corot. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 79.—*La Lac*. Corot. Rheims Museum, France.



FIG. 80.—*The Wood Gatherer*. Corot. Courtesy of the Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington, D. C.

posite of Millet's existence. Corot's pictures soothe us into thoughtful, contemplative moods. Millet's arouse us to the living work of the breadwinner. Both have joy in them—one the joy of nature, the other the joy of labour.

Corot's painting of the "Wood Gatherer," Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D. C., (Fig. 80), is his benediction to us. He signed it after he was confined to his bed and just a few days before he died. Corot's first motive for this picture was from an old study of another artist—a landscape with St. Jerome at Prayer—but this was too restricted for his comprehension of God's first temples. His wood choppers praise the Creator as they gather to distribute comfort to others. This might have been the landscape he saw in those last moments when he moved his right hand to the wall as though he were painting, and said, "Look how beautiful it is! I have never seen such an admirable landscape."

CHAPTER XII

MILLET

NO two men could be more unlike than Corot and Jean-François Millet (1814-1875). They both loved nature and both saw her in his own individual way; both were of the Barbizon group but Millet became a definite part of the tiny village and today it is Millet who fills its every nook and corner.

Millet was born at Gruchy, the second of nine children. I wonder how many of our boys lifted their eyes, as they landed at Cherbourg, to the granite cliffs above where stands the hamlet of Gruchy on the coast of La Manche—the sleeve, the French name for the English Channel. This rock-bound and stormy coast was literally his play ground, if he ever played. The house is still standing where Jean-François was born and where three generations lived under the same roof. Blessed with a gentle refined father and a loving mother and triply blessed with a grandmother who loved nature and nature's God. In one of the last letters this grandmother wrote her gifted

grandson, as late as 1846, she entreats him never to forget that he is a painter for eternity, but to keep the presence of God and the sound of the last trumpet ever in his mind. The sound of that trumpet must have been very real to the peasant folk at Gruchy, for the roar and rumble of the sea was ever in their ears—yet otherwise quiet reigned. "A stranger," said Millet, "was rarely seen there and such a silence reigned that the clucking of a hen or the cackling of a goose created a sensation." Though near the sea the soil was rich and the valley covered with grass, corn and herds.

It was a usual sight to see "The Sower," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 81), go forth to sow the grain. See him swing along over hill side and level plain with the rhythmic precision of a pendulum keeping time with the seasons, and the ploughman on the hill-top bathed in light, the harbinger of the coming harvest. I was standing before "The Sower" one day when a stray sunbeam suddenly fell on the plougher and his oxen. It was as though the golden gate had opened and a light never on land or sea glorified the group. I shall never forget the thrill of exultant joy that shot through my heart at the vision. Surely, thought I, this is the sower that went forth to sow in the parable.

Just stop a moment and look at "The Return of the Flock," Institute of Art, San Francisco (Fig. 82). Is she not calling her sheep by name—possibly admonishing when the pushing becomes unseemly. How well the stretched necks and flattened heads mark the eager haste for the evening mess. Only a bit of pencil drawing yet the touch of the master is in it. That narrow path cut through the embankment; the ease of the girl leaning on the rustic gate; the huddled sheep; the long grass; the bunch of bushes and two trees—how prosaic! Just a few pencil lines and behold a picture to be remembered!

When "The Angelus," Chauchard Collection, Paris (Fig. 83), was exhibited in America twenty-five years ago our picture-loving people flocked to see it. The numbers who saw it seemed legion and they came away enthusiastic because it was understandable. The buzzing opinions of critics pro and con made little impression at the time. From the sentimental point of view the pity was that the artist himself could not have known that America believed in him. While the picture itself is far from Millet's best nevertheless it threw a flood of light on what a sincere truth-loving artist could do in revealing the beauty of humble life. Incidentally the bringing of that picture to America was one of the many influences at work in

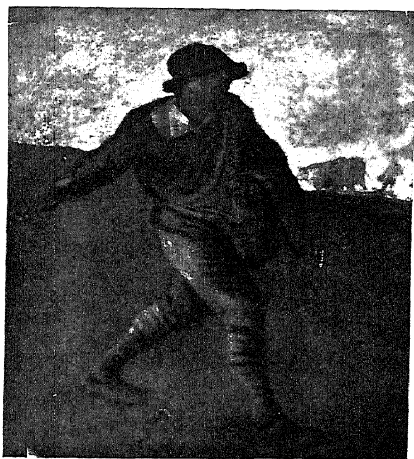


FIG. 81.—The Sower. Millet.
Private Collection.



FIG. 82.—The Return of the Flock. Millet. Courtesy of the
Institute of Art, San Francisco, California.

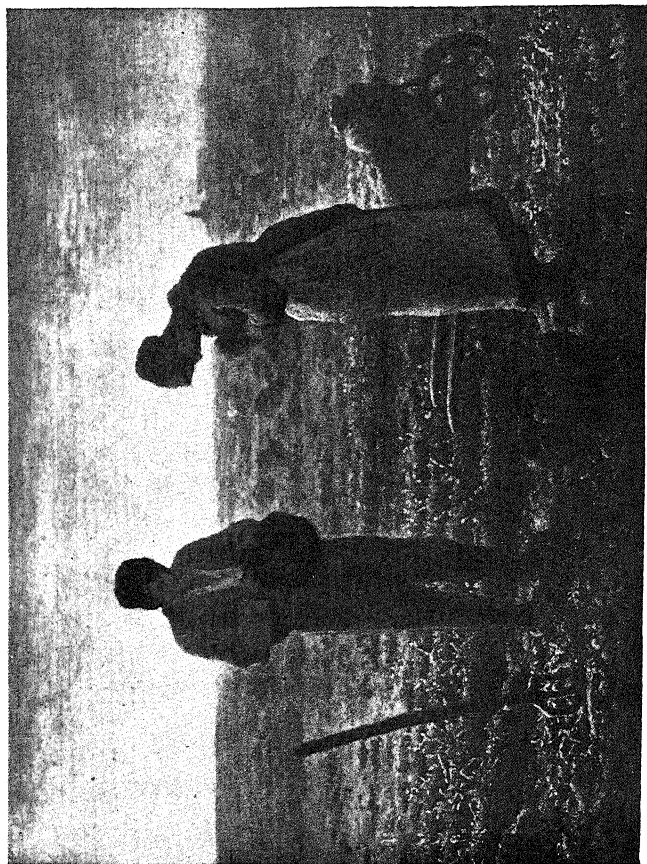


FIG. 83.—The Angelus. Millet. Chauchard Collection, Paris.

arousing our people to a love of good pictures—influences that have broadened until now international exhibitions are quite the order of the day.

Millet completed the *Angelus* in 1859, before he was in full command of his marvellous power in projecting and detaching his figures into their surroundings. In his anxiety, as he told his friend Sensier, that we too “hear the tones of the *Angelus* bell,” he has faltered in his hold on the two workers in the actual scene. And yet I remember as we stood so still before the illumined picture in the darkened room, twenty-five years ago, I seemed to hear those peasants murmuring their prayer, “*Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ*,” as well as the tone of the distant bell. After all no amount of art criticism can keep the human heart from responding to the true artist. We make too little of the human side of art—pictures are not for the artist, they are for the people.

Millet was constantly thinking of the people in terms of work—in other words he knew that only through work was there any salvation for the human race. He replied to some of his friends complaining of the lack of joy among his works, “Have you seen joy in nature? For my part I have never seen it; as its nearest approach I have seen some hours of calm and

peacefulness." What a reproach to those who are constantly looking for happiness—happiness is a state of being realized after it is gone.

Do you think these people in the "Harvesters Resting," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Fig. 84), feel joy? The interest expressed for the girl in the faces of the actors of the group is one of kindness. The man's open hands plead for the stranger who, like Ruth, was to come at meal time and eat of the bread and sit by the harvesters.

The scene is wonderfully composed. Those men and women each resting in his own individual way have that abandon that is characteristic of workers when eating and resting. The picturesque costumes of the group beautifully harmonize with the golden straw stacks and the glorious sunshine of the noon day.

Not by any means does Millet always picture the sordidness of the French peasant. He was ever striving to picture life in the living. True it was not a life of thrills yet it was the simple joys of daily doings. Could anything be fuller of home joy than this picture of "Feeding the Nestlings," Lille Museum, France (Fig. 85). Those darlings in the doorway are typical of well trained French children. How many times we have sat waiting our turn for a mouthful from the coveted bowl knowing well that the littlest one

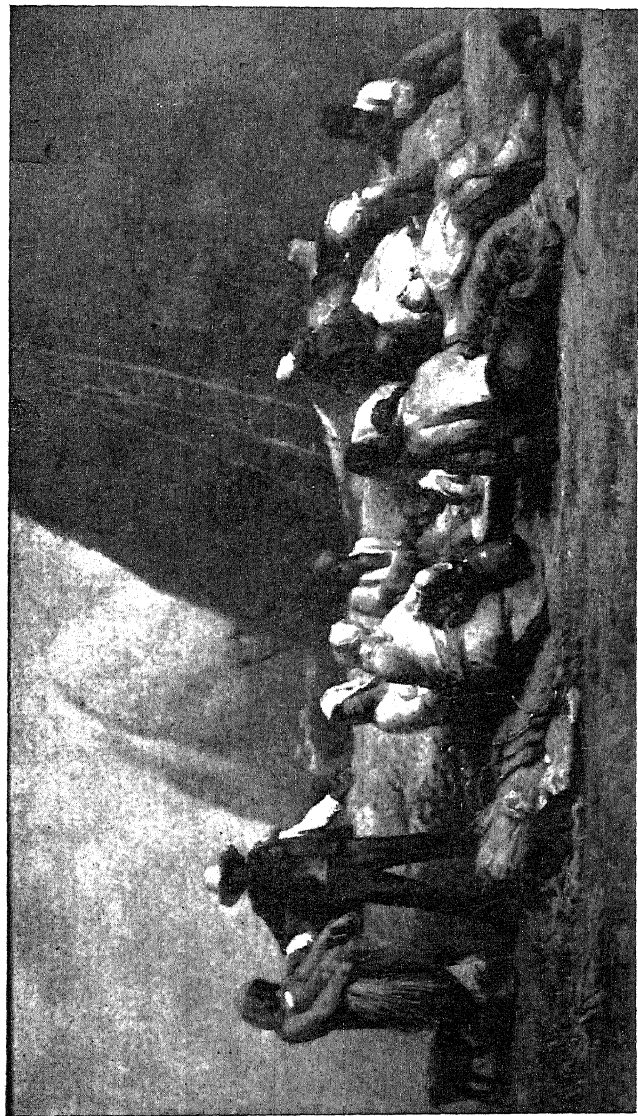


FIG. 84.—The Harvesters at Rest. Millet. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

must have the lion's share! Look how curious the old hen is. She is an essential part of the scene for she has a share in that bowl too. It is Millet's intimate understanding of the close relationship of nature's human children to all her other children that gives him such power in picturing these homely scenes. To him everything was beautiful. He would often ask, "Which is the more beautiful, a stately tree, isolated in the middle of a field, or a knotted, twisted, stunted tree gnawed by the wind and deformed by the stroke of the tempest? Neither the one nor the other: all depends on the work in which that tree is to take its place, and the effect which its presence there produces."

Look how touchingly real is his "Bringing Home the New Born Calf," Art Institute, Chicago (Fig. 86). Millet knew this scene for he was born a peasant and spent his life going and coming among them at their daily tasks. One day he came upon some men cutting grain. One of them called to him: "Monsieur Millet, this is very different from your work. I would like to see you take a sickle."

"I'll take your sickle," said Millet, "and reap faster than you and all your family." And he did.

It was no unusual occurrence for mother cow

to steal away and expect her baby to be brought home on a barrow. And these boys and their mother knew just the attention the new baby needed. It is beautiful, this homely scene. See the stoop of the taller boy as he holds the bed level for the precious burden. Can you not feel the thrill of the household over the arrival of the little stranger? A greater sense of thrift enters into the daily work. A new calf and an abundance of fresh milk opens a vista of wide possibilities. Even the little ones in the doorway feel the joy of the occasion.

Millet went to Paris to study in 1837. He says of this time, "I came to Paris with my ideas all formed in art, and I have not judged it à propos to modify them. I have been more or less fond of such and such masters or such and such form of expressing art; but I have made no changes in the fundamentals." Millet stayed in Paris several years but he could never adapt himself to the tenets of the atelier of the day. He was too strongly impressed with Michael Angelo and Poussin to be patient under the weakness of Delaroche, though he admired the works of Delacroix. His fight for existence was always a hard one and in Paris not only getting bread and butter vexed him but the contentions of the critics over his peasant pictures. He would say again and



FIG. 85.—Feeding the Nestlings. Millet. Lille Museum, France.

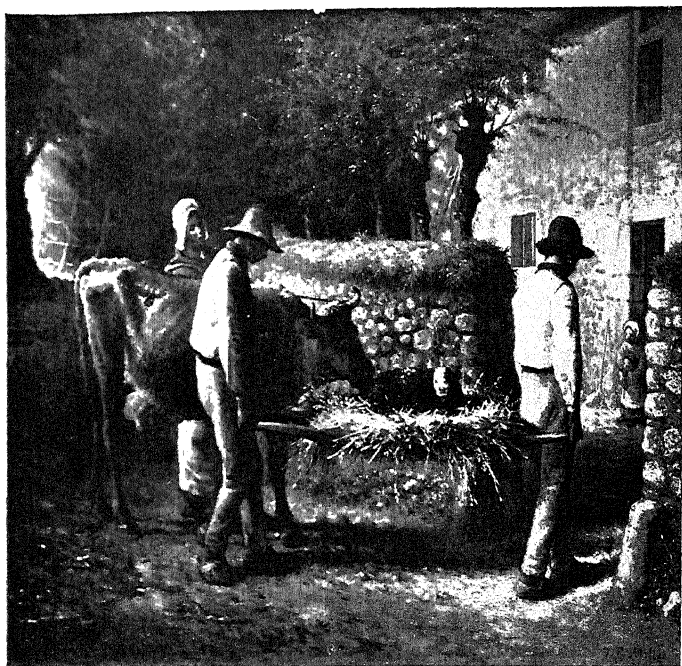


FIG. 86.—Bringing Home the New-Born Calf. Millet. Courtesy of the Art Institute, Chicago.

again, "Let them not believe that they will force me to lessen the types of the soil—a.h, no, peasant I was born peasant I shall die." Then he would add, "When I get to the ground then I shall be free." And yet during these Paris days he had become master of the nude with flesh tints approaching the great Rubens himself.

It was about 1830 when Millet went to Barbizon with his friend Jacques. Some of the 1830 men were already there and had established certain test rules to be accepted before others could enter the circle. One test was that each new comer must smoke Diaz's pipe that hung on the wall of the inn. And the kind of rings he blew would place him. Jacques' rings showed a colourist but Millet's were unclassable.

"Oh well! don't trouble about it," exclaimed Millet. "Put me down in a class of my own."

"A good answer," said Diaz, "and he looks strong and big enough to hold his own in it." And he was indeed in a class of his own!

Now that Millet is settled at Barbizon we must have a mental picture of the little village, the breeding place of such marvellous masterpieces. It is nestled so close to the Forest of Fontainebleau that the primeval boulders are now guarding both the trees of the forest and the people of the hamlet. In fact some have grown so curious

that they have overstepped their bounds to form resting places for belated lovers almost in the public highway. Low stone houses border the one wide street and among them what remains of Millet's home behind a high tight board fence. It is exasperating trying to see anything through the cracks but fortunately for me some one came out of the gate and as it closed I was inside the garden. The wonderful vision lasted only a moment, but Oh, that moment! and then I was on the outside again. What is it that bewitches us as we walk through the commonplace little village of Barbizon, who can tell? The spirits who have left an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away seem hovering near. What a privilege to have lived among such giants and yet, the neighbours probably thought them quite ordinary men.

And then to wander in that forest! Probably Millet had in mind some of its lonely spots when he painted "Solitude," Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia (Fig. 87). Note how he intensifies the feeling of loneliness by that solitary stone gate post intimating a human dwelling deserted. There is always a feeling of disappointed expectancy haunting us in the solitude left by man that we do not feel in nature's solitudes. In the latter it is the isolated remoteness from our kind

that oppresses us instead of the sense of an irretrievable loss. How satisfying this composition is with its wide open space of untrodden snow in the foreground and the fascinating background of innumerable trees—a fit place for the fairies to dwell. Millet loved to picture nature undisturbed to show just how she managed her own affairs. To him any pruning of her children caused him sorrow. He would say, after a walk in the forest.

“The tiny branches of all kinds were perhaps the most beautiful of all. It seems to me that nature wishes to make them take their revenge and to show that they are not inferior in anything, those poor, humiliated things.”

Millet's countrymen were slow of heart in recognizing his merit and slower still in paying for it. His was the old story of unappreciated talent until too late. Post-mortem honours are far too common in the art world. He was never more than able to keep the wolf from the door and often suffered many privations. These anxieties served to aggravate the terrible headaches that followed him through life—headaches so agonizing that often several days each week he could do nothing but nurse his head. Today the least scrap from his pencil or brush literally brings a thousand times its weight in gold.

CHAPTER XIII

ROUSSEAU—DUPRÉ—DIAZ

PROBABLY no two artists ever made more money for picture dealers and less for themselves during their life time than did Millet and Pierre-Etienne-Théodore Rousseau (1812-1867). The tragedy of these two lives, whose works are among the great uplifting influences of the world, is repeating itself in every age and the pity is that no remedy is yet discovered to prevent it. It is fitting that these Barbizon artists should have a special memorial in Barbizon and that it should unite them in some way to the great forest so dear to their hearts. High up on the huge boulders that have elbowed their way close to the little village is a large bronze plaque with finely modelled "Portraits of Rousseau and Millet" on it, done by Chapu as a labour of love. Looking into the faces of these grand, simple-minded men, one sees in them the strength that is drawn from nature and nature's God.

Rousseau inherited artistic tendencies. He was an only child, born in Paris, of parents who fos-

tered his predilections and gave him many early advantages. But, unfortunately, his father, generous to a fault and unwise in business ventures, decided the boy must follow a profession to bring prosperity in the future—he chose civil engineering. This was not to Théodore's liking and without asking permission he put together an artist's outfit and took French-leave. When his cousin-uncle saw the sketches he made at Butte Montmartre in front of the old church, he took the boy to Compiègne and set him to making studies from nature. This settled his career at fourteen.

Rousseau was never satisfied with any teacher or in any atelier but his own, and that was usually out-of-doors. He disliked instinctively the classic school of landscape and pictures made direct from nature were too new and radically at variance to the old methods to be accepted by the Academic artists. Thus at the very beginning of his artistic career adverse criticism was his lot. Again and again he was refused the Grand Prix de Rome but he would not subscribe to the committee's rule of thumb. At last, when only nineteen, he determined that hereafter nature should be his only teacher and immediately started south to the Cantal Mountains. This was the beginning of Rousseau's intimate knowledge of nature's convulsions in world making. Not

until 1836 did he go to Barbizon where he became one of the Pleiades. And there close to the great forest did he find some comfort. Nothing so typifies the terrible agony of mind and soul that poor Rousseau endured in his hours of depression as does the upheavals found in the depths of the Forest of Fontainebleau. He would seek out these broken spots and there find peace in some "Footpath Among the Rocks of Apremont" (Fig. 88), a peace that smiled on him with all the warmth and joy he has expressed in this picture. Not always could he bring joy out of these scenes but he painted this picture at his happiest time between 1850 and 1855. Not a hint of sorrow is in the lovely blue sky and sporting clouds. Every tree is lit with the steady glow of virile youth and age. Even in his smiles Rousseau leads where enjoyment is earned. Simply he tells of the rock pasture, the peasant, the beast of burden, the boulders with the path between them, the birch and beech trees, making of it all a harmony of exquisite colour and design.

Of all nature's children Rousseau loved her trees best. He would often say "I wish to converse with them, and to be able to say to myself, through that other language—painting—that I have put my finger upon the secret of their grandeur." Certainly he had learned their secret

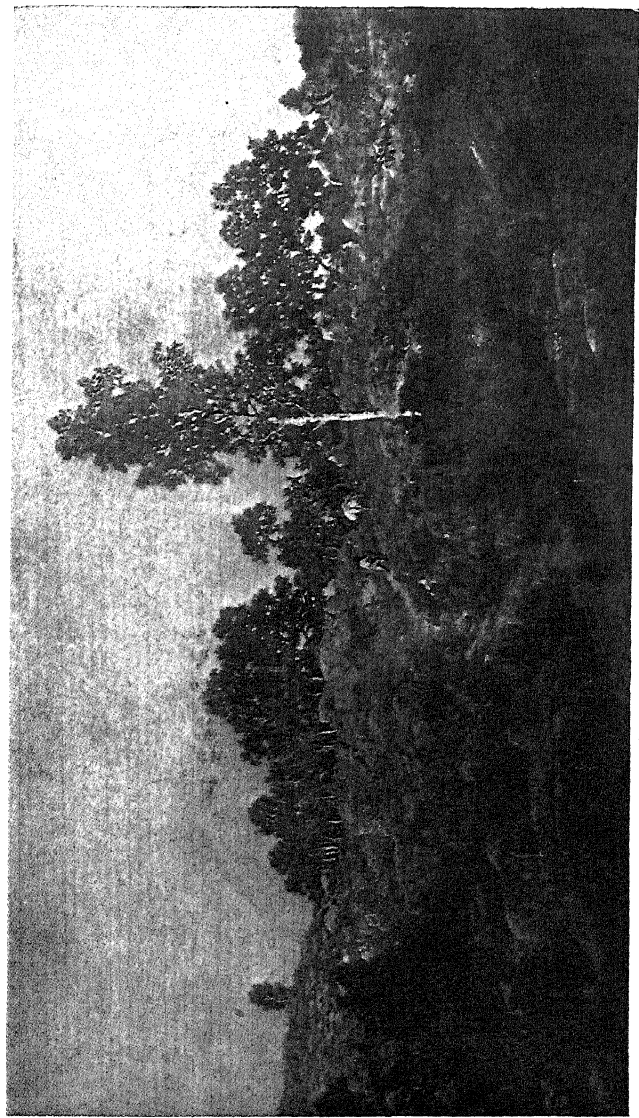


FIG. 88.—Foot-path Among the Rocks. Rousseau. Private Collection, Paris.



FIG. 89.—Edge of the Woods. Rousseau.
 Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,
 New York City.



FIG. 90.—Landscape. Rousseau. Courtesy of the Insti-
 tute of Art, San Francisco, California.

when he painted "The Edge of the Wood," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 89). That tough old sentinel standing guard over the young saplings has defied the marauding hurricane for many a year. How proudly he lifts his head as much as to say, "You have me to deal with. Look out!" The rugged growth of those storm-tossed children is not unlike that of the artist. And he felt that in them was true comfort. Days at a time he hung close to them and many a night found him resting at their feet, his head pillowed against their trunks and his body gaining strength from their roots. It wasn't that Rousseau could not live with his fellow man that he sought the solace from nature but that he might have a deeper insight into her way himself, in order to help others to go to her oftener for wisdom. His constant effort was to overcome the artificial that was strangling the visions of the spirit.

None of those 1830 men was so sensitive to the changing moods of times and seasons as Rousseau and none knew so intimately the struggles of vegetation against wind and weather. In the "Landscape," Institute of Arts, San Francisco (Fig. 90), he has shown us "The very pulse of the machine," that is twisting and moulding trunk branch, tendril and leaf into comely covering for the bare rock and clod. No won-

der that Rousseau sought out such a spot as this for his dwelling. Only fundamentals are brought out in this study of nature's processes. Only Rousseau who had been admitted to the inner circle through patient waiting could have touched so lovingly the awkward awakening—for the first pushings of plant life are ungainly—and made them seemly and interesting on canvas. Of course his pictures did not fit in with the work of the Academicians; those men seemed to think life was always in dress parade attire; and of course it took time to convince even the public that pictures of a God-made out-of-doors world were more inspiring and helpful than those of a man-made one conceived in the studio.

Rousseau's life was one long striving to reveal the thoughts and feelings of trees. He approached them from every angle and under most varying circumstances yet it was rare indeed for him to be satisfied with his work. When he painted the "Outskirts of the Forest of Fontainebleau, Sunset," Louvre (Fig. 91), his studio door and that of his faithful friend, Jules Dupré, opened side by side in the little village of Mon-soult. Dupré watched anxiously his beloved friend touch and retouch this picture until finally unable to restrain himself longer for fear the picture would be ruined, he begged Rousseau to

leave it for a month with its face to the wall. At the end of the time the two friends examined it together. After a short silence Rousseau said, "I am going to sign it; it is finished." No wonder that many critics pronounce this beautiful gem a perfect landscape painting. Even that bent tree has assumed a fascinating personality. Some particular bond of sympathy must have existed between it and the artist for over and over it is brought into his pictures. There is nothing ungainly or sinister in the deformity of that trunk—rather it is a blessing in disguise with its far spreading shade.

Jules Dupré (1812-1889) was the first artist of the famous group to go to Barbizon and the last one to leave the little village. As a friend he could remain faithful under injustice and win out by loyalty. His own success always meant greater opportunity to help his friends. We have learned from Millet, Corot and Rousseau and shall continue to learn from the other men of the group—Troyon, Diaz and Daubigny, that constant struggle against scoffing ignorance was their lot. Dupré seemed to be the one man who could in a measure compel the public to stop! look!! listen!!! and finally buy of these artists whose vision was reclaiming the nation and the world. Not that he was as strong as the trio—

Rousseau, Millet and Corot—but he had that indefinable something that attracts people in general which naturally gave him a better chance to interest the public in his work.

Dupré was born in Nantes. He painted porcelain in his father's factory until he was eighteen then he went to Paris. From the very first his work was popular and though so young he was big enough to recognize the greater merit of the other landscape painters. Dupré and Rousseau, the same age (1812), both drew inspiration direct from nature—the one a happy interpreter of nature as a helpmeet to man, the other an earnest seeker to know nature's moods and learn her secrets.

"The Old Oak," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 92), has an attitude of friendliness that draws us to its shade and makes us feel that others of our kind have rested there and that we are welcome. There is not the life mystery clinging to it that is in Rousseau's bent tree. We feel no special longing to get at the secrets hidden within the rough bark. The glory of light, of colour, of atmosphere is here playing around and over the scene and lifting us into a more joyous mood. Those meadow lands in the distance enlarge our vision and the grazing cows steady our restlessness.

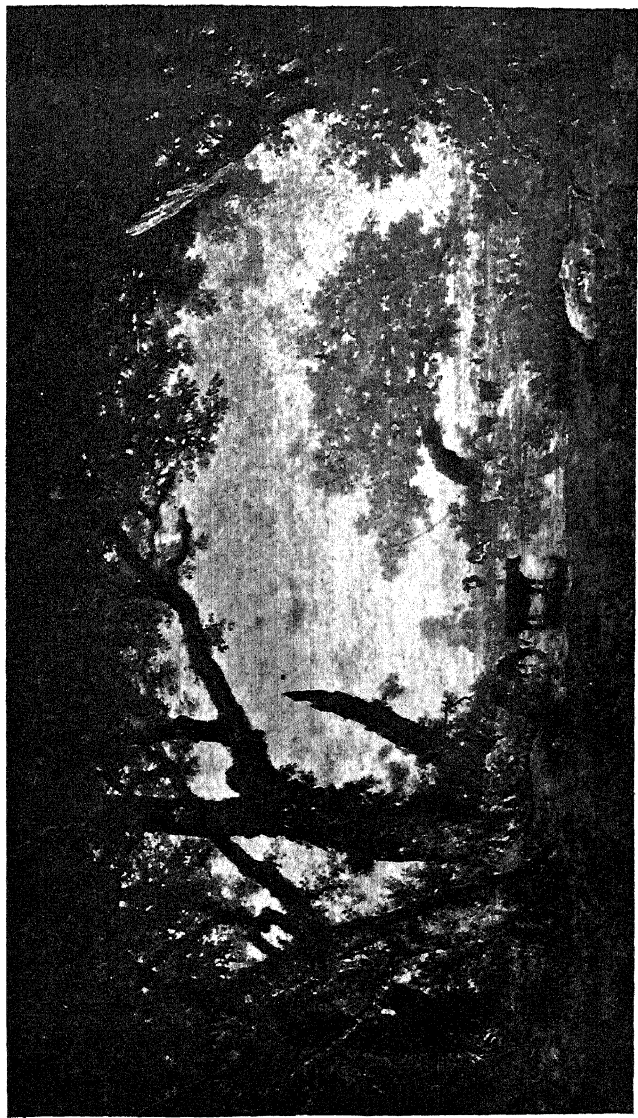


FIG. 91.—Outskirts of Forest of Fontainebleau. Roussea. Louvre, Paris.

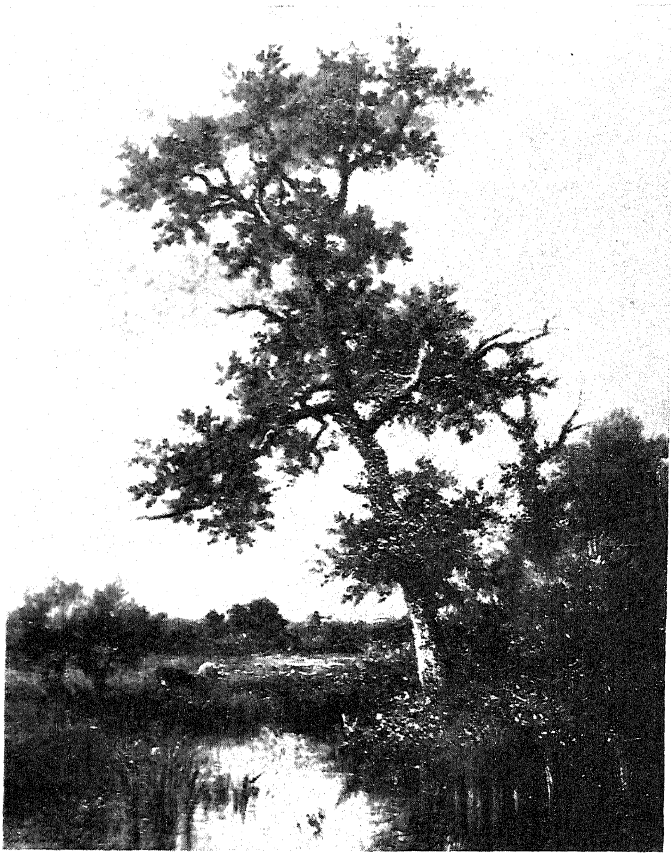


FIG. 92.—The Old Oak. Dupré. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

Dupré knew instinctively the rustic scenes that would please. The charm of "The Hay Wagon," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 93), is the human interest expressed in overcoming the difficulty of rounding that curving hill-side road. A storm is brewing. The family hurrying home, have come to a sandy sidling road leading around a curve. The woman with the child beside her on the hay, guides the horse, while the man pushes the wagon from behind. The sense of strain in the low-lying body makes one feel the heavy road and creaking wheels ploughing through the loose sand. The picture is a delicious colour harmony for no one knew better than Dupré how to make colour sing. To every man and woman of the farm this scene is a breath from home. And see how wonderfully the bordering trees are lighted up by the radiant cloud flecked sky.

It was sad indeed for Dupré as he watched his old friends one by one slip away from him until he was left alone at Barbizon. After they were gone he felt the old home calling him in the forest of L'Isle—Adam, a few miles north of Paris, where his mother had kept house for him and Rousseau and there he died ten years later than the others.

When Narcisco Vergaleo Diaz de la Peña (1809-1876) died at Mentome his wife brought

his remains to Paris. Jules Dupré, one of the pall-bearers, said sorrowfully, "The sun has lost one of its most beautiful rays." These two artists were friends from early boyhood when they worked together in a porcelain factory learning design and decorating plates, jam-pots and apothecaries' gallipots—afterwards they were often styled the Barbizon school decorator-painters.

Diaz was of Spanish parentage. His father and mother fled to France during the Spanish troubles of 1809, reaching Bordeaux where the little Diaz was born. Diaz is from Diaz de la Peña meaning "days of suffering." Quite appropriately his name is suggestive of the hardships his mother endured. Later in life he too went through great physical pain and finally lost his leg through the effects of a snake bite. What seemed at the time a great calamity was really a source of good fortune in giving the boy time for study and meditation. He never had much training in his art but a fertile imagination gave him a great variety of subjects, and he loved brilliant colour. The two elements in his nature—Spanish inheritance and French environment—are easily recognized in his pictures in the rich colour and dense shadows of the former and poetic feeling of the latter.



FIG. 93.—The Hay Wagon. Dupré. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 94.—No Admittance. Diaz. Private Collection, Antwerp.



FIG. 95.—Descent of the Bohemians. Diaz. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Art, Boston, Mass.

One of the few figure pieces which illustrates this combination of inheritance and adopted environment most perfectly is "No Admittance," in a private collection, Antwerp (Fig. 94). Those full blown goddesses with their warm flesh tints and cool black hair of the southland illumined by brilliant coloured drapery and framed in the open arches of the sombre-toned architecture are full of the poetry of youth and perfection. Little cupid finds a cold reception among these glorious creatures still enamoured of themselves. Standing in the full light with a cloud-flecked sky smiling down on them nothing could give greater charm to their ripened womanhood.

When Diaz painted the "Descent of the Bohemians," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Fig. 95), he seemed to have taken tribute from the hues of every known bird, gem and flower. That goodly company winding down the forest defile sparkles and glitters under the dancing sunbeams like humming-birds in a garden full of bloom. A stream of precious stones pouring down a mountain stream could not be more bewitching in colour and dazzling light. One can gain no conception of the brilliancy of the picture without seeing it. The harmony of every tint, tone and hue, the perfect balance in light and shade, the poetic rhythm of line and mass

and the joyous swing of the moving company—all held together by the most subtle atmospheric film—mark this picture as a masterpiece for all time.

Diaz was among the first to go to Barbizon after Dupré, and it was his old pipe that Millet smoked when he entered the charmed circle (see page 129). None knew better than Diaz, with his big heart and practical ideas, how to comfort and cheer.

CHAPTER XIV

DAUBIGNY—TROYON—JACQUE—
BRETON

CHARLES FRANÇOIS DAUBIGNY (1817-1878), was the youngest of the men forming the Barbizon group. He was born in Paris but it was not the city, with its marvels of art, of antiquities, of all sorts and conditions of men that aroused the boy's artistic soul; it was the river—that mysterious secret-keeper named after the river deity, Sequana, that called him—and later the river Oise. He never went to Barbizon to live though the bond of friendship between him and the others was warm and tender. He chose rather the constant companionship of his beloved river. Even today an old dilapidated house-boat is still shown at Auvers as the one he used for home and studio. He used to pass up and down the Oise sketching quiet nooks, spreading fields and tall church spires, and peasant cottages clustered close by the river.

No scene was too humble for Daubigny's

beauty-finding brush, and no hour too early or too late so long as the sun was there. He was out early when he caught the first image of the sun mirrored in the water that "Morning on the Seine," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 96). And the ducks, too seem to have caught that image as they crinkle the water in hurrying to the cozy edge of the bank. Daubigny loved the atmosphere, the feathery trees, the low-lying grove in the distance and the tiny hamlet at the highest point; all are intimately bound together with that impalpable something that marks all his scenes. Karl Daubigny, the artist's son, has inscribed on the back of the painting that it was done by his father.

Daubigny, in a frank, straightforward manner shows us scenes lying right before us. Look at the landscape of "A Hamlet on the Seine," Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington (Fig. 97), and note how carefully he shows us interesting bits of detail yet how comprehensive his conception of the scene. We enjoy with him the ducks and the patches of water, the women gathering roots, the fluffy trees, the straight roadway and the tidy barns, the church in the village and the buildings in the distance. These details are neither confusing nor insistent they simply awaken our minds to the beauties of common scenes

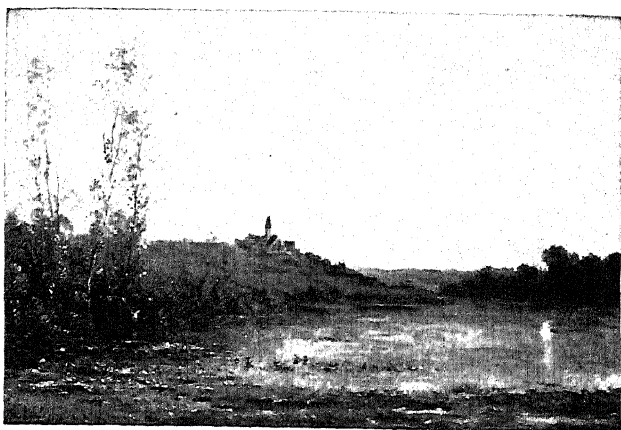


FIG. 96.—Morning on the Seine. Daubigny. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 97.—Hamlet on the Seine. Daubigny. Courtesy of the Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington, D. C.

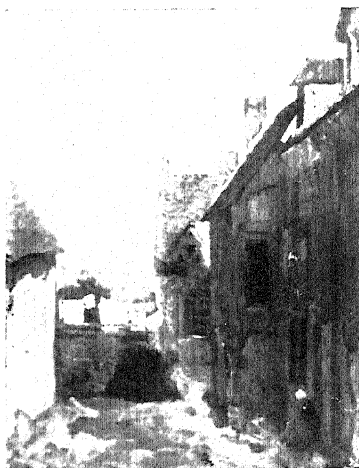


FIG. 98.—Village Scene. Daubigny. Courtesy of the Institute of Art, San Francisco, Calif.

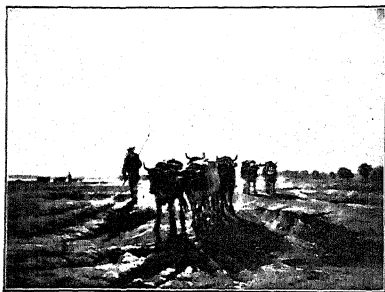


FIG. 99.—Oxen Going to Work. Troyon. Louvre, Paris.

and help us to change our point of view—and be comforted.

It is always the homely, homey scenes that seem to attract Charles Daubigny most. Take the "Village Scene," Institute of Art, San Francisco (Fig. 98). Was ever anything more suggestive of the daily doings of home life? The clothes on the line tell the story of early morning hours in the suds and rinse water, the short shadows point to high noon and the woman in the doorway suggests a thrifty housewife with the meal ready and waiting for the return of the field toilers. Over and over Daubigny shows the community spirit of the French peasant in their little homes snuggled close together where the farm labourers live and where morning and evening they discuss their joys and sorrows, work and ambitions as one great family. We feel that the artist has made no effort to attract us to this special home but that he is simply recording what he has seen many times. I wonder if we were in Auvers today we would recognize these houses and the stone wall at the end of the street. I hope so. Daubigny's rendering of nature, like the rest of the Barbizon men, was of the essence of things. He was a naturalist pure and simple. Corot and Daubigny lie near each other in the Père-Lachaise.

The real genius of the Barbizon artists lay in their ability to make us feel the scene as they felt it. It was not a photographic reproduction of some special spot, but they worked into their pictures the atmosphere, the undefined vitality that lingers in the mind long after material vision is erased. This is particularly true with the landscapes of Constant Troyon (1810-1865). His living, breathing cattle come in as a natural part of the changing scene. "The Oxen Going to Work," Louvre (Fig. 99), could no more be left out of that morning scene than could the fields—one is dependent on the other to make a complete whole. As we step into the long gallery of the Louvre, where the picture hangs, we feel that largeness of conception is one of the qualities that makes Troyon's pictures understood—he speaks to that great majority of picture-lovers who feel the truth but cannot explain how. We stand before the picture and are alone with it. We watch the sun just peeping above the horizon send a flood of light over men and cattle; we feel the crisp morning air catch the breath of the plodding oxen and hold it in millions of globules while the sunlight, dancing over them, turns them into tiny rainbows. We seem to hear the crunch of the yielding soil under the heavy tread and see



FIG. 100.—Return from Market. Troyon. Courtesy of the Art Institute, Chicago.

how the quivering sides move rythmically with each breath.

Even in the "Return from the Market," Art Institute, Chicago (Fig. 100), where the sheep and horses fill the larger part of the canvas, Troyon's large conception of the big-out-of-doors dominates the picture. The sky is aglow with the long rays of the low sun. The flying dust particles, acting as prisms, set the air quivering and tint trees and roadside with rainbow glory. That Troyon understands animals is true, for no one could have portrayed jaded sheep with so much truth without a personal knowledge of animals after the market is over and they have had a long hot journey home.

Troyon was born in Sèvres, that little city less than three miles from Paris, so famous for its exquisite porcelain for one hundred and fifty years. Naturally Troyon served an apprenticeship at decorating in the Sèvres factory. Jules Breton (see page 150), gives a personal glimpse of Troyon after he was known to fame. Breton, seventeen years younger than Troyon, received a visit from the master. He had come to see Breton's picture of the "Benediction of the Wheat in Artois." "One morning," says Breton, "a man of great size knocked at my door, having a slight

rustic aspect. 'I am Troyon,' said he to me. 'They have spoken to me of your picture and I wish to see it—!' He looked at the canvas a long time, a very long time without opening his mouth." Breton insisted that he make some criticism. When at last Troyon said, "Yes, there are faults, but you will correct them sufficiently soon, and that will be perhaps so much the worse."

We feel sure that this cow going to the "Drinking Place," Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington (Fig. 101), was just in time to get into Troyon's picture. The picture would have been empty without her! And how intimate a part of the landscape she is. In fact were she not there that wide expanse might almost give a feeling of desolation. She is the note that binds us close to the distant horizon, the sturdy willows, the isolated pool and the artist. We love Troyon for he loved Nature in a big, wholesome way.

It is just as possible to think of Troyon's animals without a landscape as it is to think of the reverse. What a strange scene these "Cattle," Institute of Art, San Francisco (Fig. 102), would make without that glorious cloud-decked sky and the low lying, far stretching, straggling land with its oozy pools in the hollows. It took those cattle and sheep and Troyon to find the wealth hidden away in that remote spot.



FIG. 101.—Drinking Place. Troyon. Courtesy of the Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington, D. C.



FIG. 102.—Cattle. Troyon. Courtesy of the Institute of Art, San Francisco, California.

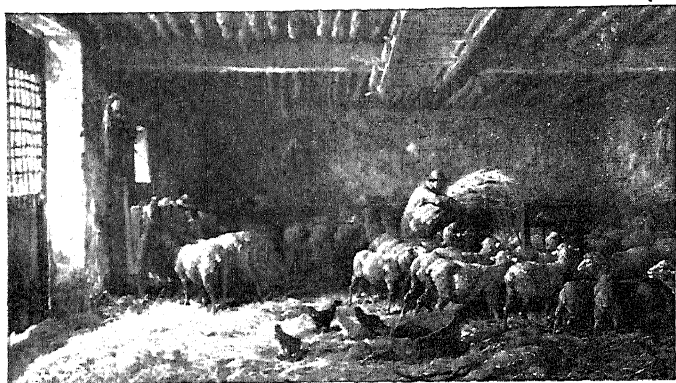


FIG. 103.—The Sheepfold. Jacque. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 104.—The Watering Place. Jacque. Courtesy of the Institute of Art, San Francisco, California.

Charles Jacque (1813-1894) was born in Paris. He was trained in geological engineering and worked in England before he went to Barbizon with Millet where he found himself in the rustic life of peasants. These same peasants probably laughed in their sleeve at the young artist's lack of practical sense in trading his new wheelbarrow for an old one. They little realized that that same weather-worn, dilapidated barrow was to become famous the world over. To Jacque rustic meant the spirit that dwells among workers of the soil and none knew better than he how to picture the effect of that spirit. Could a real "Sheepfold," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 103), give a truer sense of the huddling, pushing stupidity of sheep and the wisdom of the shepherd regulating the senseless flock than Jacque has given in this picture? The tumbled hay in the rack, the scattered straw on the ground and the biddies scratching for choice morsels are full of the spirit of farm life. This is an actual scene seen through the eyes of one who never gave a false note in portraying the habit of use that comes to animals or things by being used.

In this drawing signed by the artist of "The Watering Place," Institute of Art, San Francisco (Fig. 104), we realize that Jacque understood the habit of horses as well as that of pigs and

sheep. He was often called the "Raphael of Pigs" and, after looking at this sheep picture we add the "Raphael of Sheep," only to find on further knowledge of his paintings that we might extend the term to the "Raphael of Animals." These horses with the typical eagerness of the equine family when consumed with thirst, show how well Jacque understood animals in general and that he was not confined within the limits of a particular scene. The drawing is especially valuable for in it he embodies the essence that makes all his scenes a living reality. The trees, wind-blown and storm-tossed, have the vigour of young life making good against odds. Although Jacque's smoke rings from Diaz's pipe marked him a colourist he was not always true in colour sense, but he never fails to give the charm of life that makes us feel its truth.

Victor Hugo wrote to Jules Adolphe Breton (1827-1906), after his publication of "Jeanne," in 1875, "To be twice the poet; to be as Lamartine and as Corot; to be a poet both by the strophe and by the palette;—that has been given you." It means a great deal to have the personal opinion of such men as Victor Hugo and Troyon on Breton for few artists have provoked such varied criticisms as he. The fact that he was a financial success with his art almost from the begin-

ning of his career blinded the public to the real worth of his work and also aroused much jealous cavil among art circles. That he chose for his theme the same peasant farmers as Millet and yet pictures them from an entirely different standpoint provoked much needless controversy. If we will stop a moment and listen to the two men, Millet and Breton, as they sit together discussing their art and their ideals, we will find that the older master with his deep insight into the bigness of life understands and explains the different points of view. He says, "We are both seeking infinite nature. We are free to follow the furrow which we love, preferring, you, the convolvulus in the wheat and I the rude potatoes."

Bearing this thought in mind let us look at "The Gleaner," Luxembourg, Paris (Fig. 105), with a clearer idea of Breton's point of view. He saw more in this French girl than a gleaner in the fields. His was the vision that, when the call came, lifted France above the toiler with bent back and bowed head, and the butterfly with her paint-pot and powder-box. France was alive because of the unrest seething in those same peasants that Millet saw. This young woman is just as fit in intention and power to glean and hoe with any of those, her companions, who are gleaning in the wake of the reaper. Let her

straighten herself and look out on the world. She will work the better for the new vision. The convolvulus in the wheat has gladdened many a heart even though a little extra work was necessary because she put her smiling face in the wrong place.

Breton was born in the little town of Courrières in the province of Pas-de-Calais not far from Arras. Though his mother died when he was quite young yet his childhood was a wholesome and happy one under the care of his maternal grandmother. His father's garden was his greatest delight. He used to say of it, "A true French garden with its vegetable beds and its flower borders—here, among the flower and the insects, my first reveries had birth." He was given unusual school advantages and at sixteen began regular lessons in art first at Ghent then Antwerp and at nineteen he was sent to Paris to complete his art studies.

Breton soon found that his forte was the genre of the fields though he first tried historical subjects, indeed he went so far as to send, in 1853, one of the latter—"Encampment of Bohemians in the Ruins of the Abbey of St. Bavin"—to the Brussels exposition. At the suggestion of his brother he also sent "The Little Gleaners." To his surprise the latter was hung in the place of



FIG. 105.—The Gleaner. Jules Breton. Luxembourg, Paris.

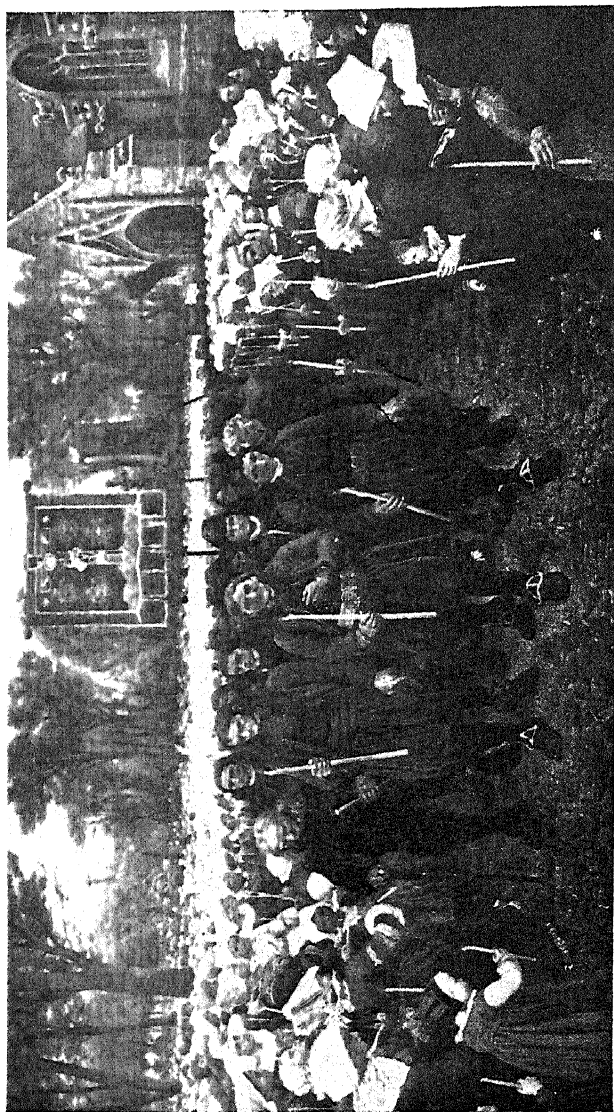


FIG. 106.—The Grand Pardon. Jules Breton. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

honour. He loved the peasant life of his home province and spent most of his life painting among them.

Breton was greatly interested in the curious and quaint customs of Brittany and made several extended visits among the Bretons to gather material. One of his large canvases picturing the "Grand Pardon in Brittany," is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 106). Brittany is the land of Pardons. During the summer scarcely a village or hamlet but has one. For two hundred years they have remained unchanged, a remnant of the ancient Feast of the Dead. Breton has caught the spirit that prompted these people to come together—simple devout worshippers, perfectly sincere, with no pretence, no striving for effect. We wonder how he could ever have overcome the monotony of white caps row upon row and numberless bare headed men moving between, until we study the faces and then suddenly that band of pilgrims becomes a great personal whole and each individual is a living soul. Who could ever forget the charm of those women! Every shade of holy joy is expressed in their manner and look. And those splendid men. How well the artist has portrayed the vigour of manhood and the feebleness of age. The soft flowing hair of those men has no savour

of eccentric idiosyncrasies but rather the noble dignity of a time-honoured custom. It is night and the procession is on its way from the church to the special shrine to kneel before the tall cross on which is the figure of the crucified Saviour. These "Pardons" are unlike any of the feasts or fasts that pertain to religious ceremonials in Roman Catholic countries or even other sections of France. A certain honest conviction fills every man, woman and child in the community during a "Pardon" that is felt to be from the heart. To be a part of one of these ceremonials is to enter into the spiritual life that guides and governs the daily life in Brittany. A "Pardon" is simply the spontaneous overflowing of gratitude in the Brittany children to God and his blessed Son, for all temporal and spiritual blessings. The very simplicity of their faith is the charm that draws us to them.

When Breton painted "The Song of the Lark," Institute of Art, Chicago (Fig. 107), he gave in the simplest manner the highest expression of his art. He has caught the unspoiled child of nature at the moment of her soul's awakening to the exquisite music of one of God's feathered creatures. The lark has risen from her very feet and in tones almost divine is winging its way to the presence of its maker. Her native grace



FIG. 107.—The Song of the Lark. Jules Breton. Courtesy of the
Institute of Art, Chicago, Illinois.

is that of the child unspoiled by art. The exultation on her lips and the light in her eyes show entire unconsciousness of self, of surroundings, of scene—she is wholly absorbed catching the last glimpse and sound of the bird as it mounts higher and higher into the blue depths. She might well say to us, in the words of Wordsworth,

“Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
For thy song, Lark, is strong;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds!
Singing, singing
With clouds and sky above thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!”

Very wonderful is the depth and distance of that sky and horizon. Proudly, like a young creature apart from the workers, does she step along the dirt path, her bare feet answering to the spring of the loose earth and her comely arms swinging in rhythm with the music! The sun, slowly appearing in the east, is marking her every move and adding his glory to the joy and gladness of the scene. It is the soul of that young reaper and others like her who will bring a new France to a glorious power for good in the world's League of Nations.

CHAPTER XV

GLEYRE—FLANDRIN—DAUMIER— COUTURE

WE found as we grouped a number of artists and called them the Barbizon school that we simply made time and place points of likeness and not the artists themselves, for each artist was distinctly individual in every particular. True they all were breaking away from the cut and dried convention of the Academy and the majority of them found the little hamlet at the edge of the great forest exceedingly helpful. And now we come to a group of other men who were quite as individual artists; the common meeting ground seems to be the great art center, Paris, yet each is as isolated in his work as though living in the Forest of Fontainebleau.

Marc Charles Gabriel Gleyre (1806-1874) was born in Chevilly, Canton Vaud, Switzerland. He is more French than Swiss for Vaud was not added to the Swiss Cantons until 1803, only three years before Gleyre's birth. Nevertheless the mystery and poetic charm of the sturdy little re-

public were in his blood and from the snow-capped mountains he gained a certain independence that characterized him and his works. Then, too, the mysterious blue water of Lac Lemman doubtless awakened his sensitive imagination and set him dreaming dreams and seeing visions. When Charles was quite young his parents moved to Lyons—that city so filled with the spirit of the great men—and in that atmosphere was fostered his artistic nature.

Gleyre was neither a classicist nor a romanticist. He was a quiet, patient worker absorbed in his own meditations, disliking public applause and devoted to his friends. He did study a short time with Hersent after he went to Paris in 1824, but the rest of his training came from copying the old masters in Italy in 1828.

The one picture by which Gleyre will be remembered is his "Lost Illusions," in the Louvre (Fig. 108). A curious state of mind came over him one time while sitting on the banks of the Nile, in Egypt. The vision that presented itself before him persisted in keeping itself clear in his mind for eight years, then he transferred it to canvas. In the picture he has replaced himself by an old poet. Notice that lying on the ground is a lyre and a shepherd's crook and that he sits on the banks of the river apparently gazing

into space. This motionless figure is like a bronze statue full of mysterious lore. In an Egyptian barge gliding by sits a beautiful maiden surrounded by a group of young girls. The two angels standing at the left singing add great charm to the scene and the nude boy on the edge of the boat dropping roses on the water is just the note needed to harmonize the age old river with the ethereal beings floating away so lightly. The calm waters stretching away in the distance are bathed in the most delicious atmosphere and, but for the birds flying about and the swell of the single sail, one might imagine that nature was holding her breath before a scene so lovely. This picture is sometimes called "Evening."

Gleyre's life was an uneventful one except that his pictures brought him some recognition. His death came suddenly from the rupture of a blood-vessel of the heart while he was visiting an Alsace-Lorraine exhibition May 4, 1874. A writer of the time summing up Gleyre, says, "He had the talent of lending real and precise form to the most fugitive dreams—whatever he undertook was executed with scrupulous conscientiousness, without either fraud or artifice."

One thing we can be perfectly sure of as we pass these splendid French artists before our mind's eye—they never said, "If I had money and

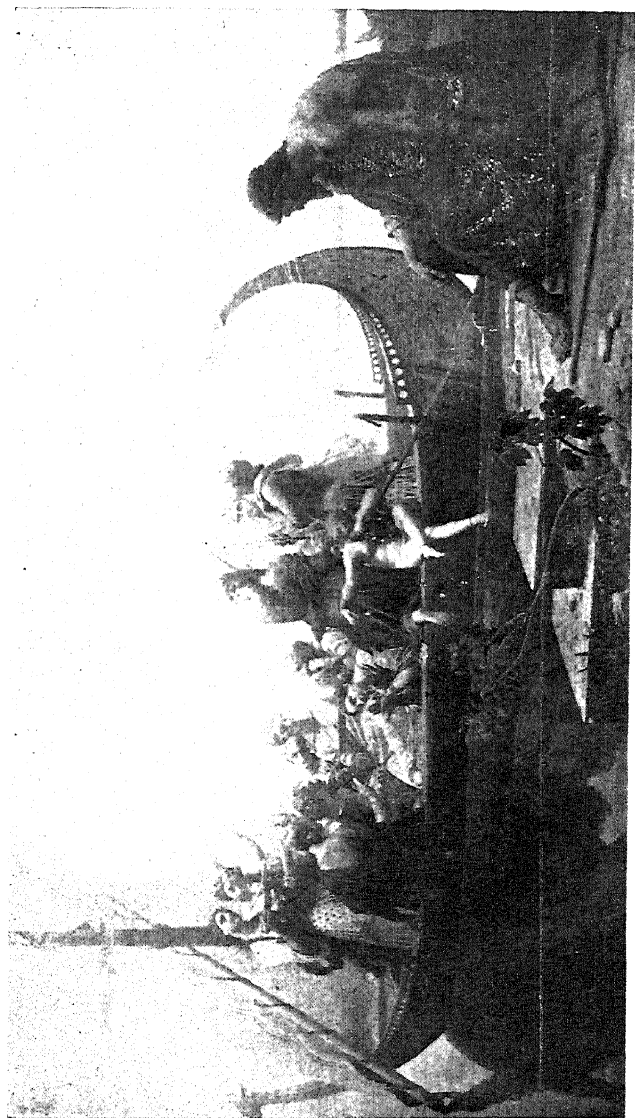


FIG. 108.—*Lost Illusions*. Gleyre. Louvre, Paris.

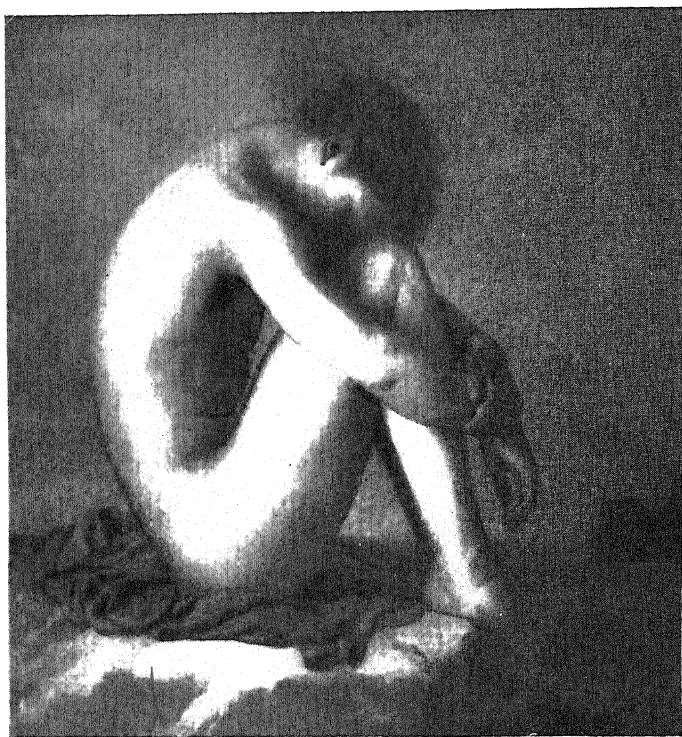


FIG. 109.—Etude or The Pearl Diver. Flandrin. Louvre, Paris.

pull I would do so and so." The great majority of them have risen to grand heights without money and prestige. We find a fine example of this in Jean Hippolyte Flandrin (1890-1864). He was very poor—so poor that he walked from Lyons to Paris in 1829 and lived there in poverty in order to study his beloved painting. Did it pay? Today he is called the "religious painter of France," and "Flandrin without fault."

Flandrin was born in Lyons and spent the first twenty years of his life in that city of wealth and culture. In three years after going to Paris he won the Prix de Rome which gave him five years study in the Eternal City. His first picture to receive a medal in the French Salon, in 1836, was "Dante and Vergil," now in the museum of Lyons.

Flandrin was particularly strong as a draftsman. One of the splendid examples of his keen understanding of the muscular development of the human body is in "Etude," sometimes called the "Pearl Diver," in the Louvre (Fig. 109). The ease and grace of that nude figure is superb. It is not an easy position to take—try it! yet Flandrin has so perfectly adjusted the body that every joint and sinew is working in harmony under the control of the elastic muscles.

Flandrin did many monumental works in

church decoration. In fact it is his religious paintings that have brought him the greatest fame. As early as 1840 he was commissioned to redecorate one of the oldest churches in Paris—St. Germain-des-Prés. The two most noted of these mural paintings are in the choir—"Entry of Christ into Jerusalem," and "Bearing the Cross." When St. Vincent de Paul was finished, 1844, the decoration of it was offered to Ingres and Delaroche but they both refused the commission. This was Flandrin's opportunity. Extending around the nave he painted his justly famous frieze, "The Nations of the World advancing toward the Gates of Heaven." The work is fashioned in the manner of the early Christian Ravenna-mosaics. Over the entrance door are St. Paul and St. Peter preaching the gospel. St. Louis IX is one of the principal figures in the centre of one group of believers on the right. The decorations were finished in 1854.

Flandrin's two brothers, who were artists, often worked with him in his mural painting. But Hippolyte far outranked them as a painter. During the last of his life Hippolyte devoted himself to portrait painting. He was so successful in captivating the public that more orders came to him than he could possibly execute. An amusing story is told of one very beautiful

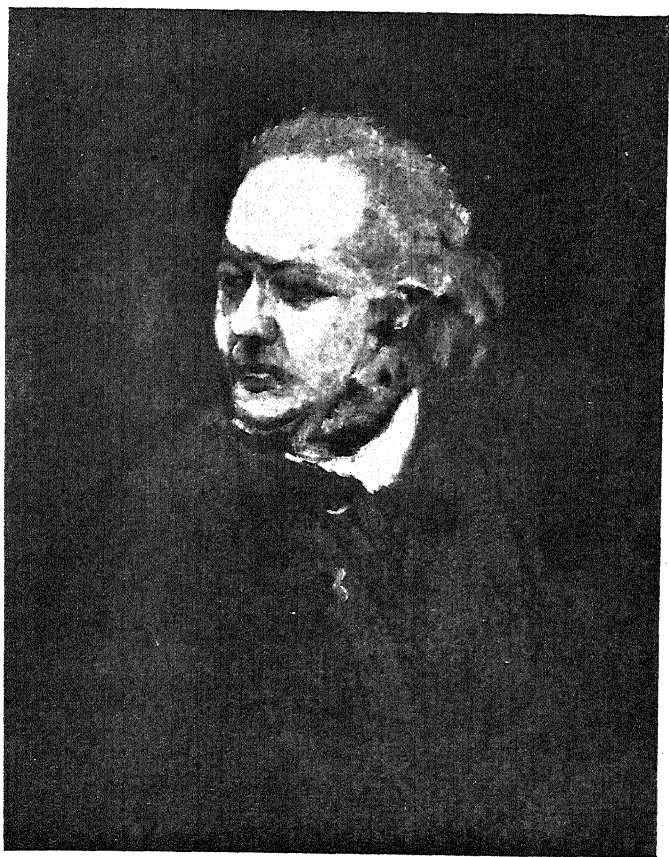


FIG. 110.—Portrait of Daubigny. Daumier. National Gallery, London.



FIG. 111.—Les Avocats. Daumier. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

woman offering him 80,000 francs if he would paint her portrait but he simply bowed her from his studio in silence.

We have become so used to thinking of Honoré Daumier's (1808-1879) art in terms of caricature that we are taken by surprise when we come on his fine "Portrait of Charles Daubigny" (see page 143), in the National Gallery, London (Fig. 110). What a splendid tribute to a friend! The personalities of both artists are brought to the front. Daumier is giving the very essence of the man who saw in swampy, unclaimed land the poetry of light and atmosphere and lifted the humble truck-gardener's home into regions of beauty and love. This man saw deeper than surface slime and weeds. To him all God's out-of-doors was for man to use and the blessings coming from proper use. Daubigny and Daumier might have been taken for brothers in looks though the latter was nine years older, and they both died within a year of each other.

At the beginning of Daumier's career his caustic pencil put him in prison six months, for caricaturing the citizen-king, as Louis Philippe was called. This did not damp his ardour, however, for exposing the weak points of those in high places or emphasizing strong traits in those advocating a cause.

Nothing could be finer than his keen perception as shown in this painting of "Les Avocats," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. III). In the background is a group of women. The weeping one is evidently the client of the haughty lawyer. The two opponents, men at law have thought to make game of the lawyer for the defence, but their fun falls flat under his scathing sarcasm. No wit is keen enough to stand against the look of scorn and indifference turned upon them. We watch the three men with the interest we would give to a like incident in real life. If only we could catch the words of banter and the reply cutting like a two edged sword. Daumier understood perfectly how to place those figures by the sun-lit wall to emphasize every pose and gesture; and also knew the rich low tones needed to give balance to the whole. He never sacrifices the laws that make for good art to point a moral or adorn a tale consequently his caricatures are always interesting pictures. It is little wonder that he was not taken up by the rich dilettante collector; his art was too subtle for them to dare expose their foibles to his probing brush.

Daumier was born in Marseilles. His father, a glazier, once published a book of poetry which may account for the son's poetic ability with brush and pencil. Honoré was not only a poet

but he was far-seeing with a vision that at times was prophetic in its penetration into causes that would bring forth events—events that came.

One of the finest of Daumier's large works is "*Scène de la Révolution*," the Rouart Collection, London (Fig. 112). In no painting does he more fully justify the title of "French Michael Angelo," than in this. Those few figures represent the spirit of the Revolution in its entirety. That central enthusiast flings herself across the canvas as if the fire of the ages were impelling her forward. Was ever a figure more firmly modelled? It might have been chiselled from the virgin marble by the great Italian master. The impelling impetus of the youth with the dark hair is tremendous. In those two figures Daumier embodies the idealist leading a gathering crowd with the zeal of an impassioned seer and the hot headed fanatic knowing no reason. The cynic at the left and the anarchist at the right plainly suggest how quickly the mob spirit would manifest itself were the leader struck down. No one of his time sensed more accurately the temper of a French crowd. He lived among the people keeping his finger on the public pulse and recording each fluctuation as only he could.

But very sorrowful days were coming to Daumier. In 1850 his eyes began to fail until after

ten years total blindness overcame him. He was blessed with the noblest of friends. Among the number were Victor Hugo, Balzac, Rousseau, Diaz, Daubigny, Millet, Courbet and Corot. It was through the kindness of Corot that he had a home in his helplessness, at Valmondois-on-Seine-et-Oise, where he died at fifty years of age never having been able to earn a living at his art. Not until the twentieth century came in did the public recognize him as a painter. Today his works are among the greatest treasures sought for by those with long bank accounts.

Thomas Couture (1815-1879) was born at Senlis, north of Paris. He studied art under Delacoeche but soon broke away from any school or particular teacher. Couture really began the Semi-classic movement though he was not big enough to do more than protest against the art of the time. The one picture that brought him fame "The Romans of the Decadence," Louvre (Fig. 113), promised much that he never fulfilled. Here he has taken a classic subject and by freedom of treatment and rich colouring has given it a realism far beyond the academic work of the time. That scene of unbridled passion might well represent the condition of the French people under the spell of the Revolution and its baleful aftermath. The public recognized that

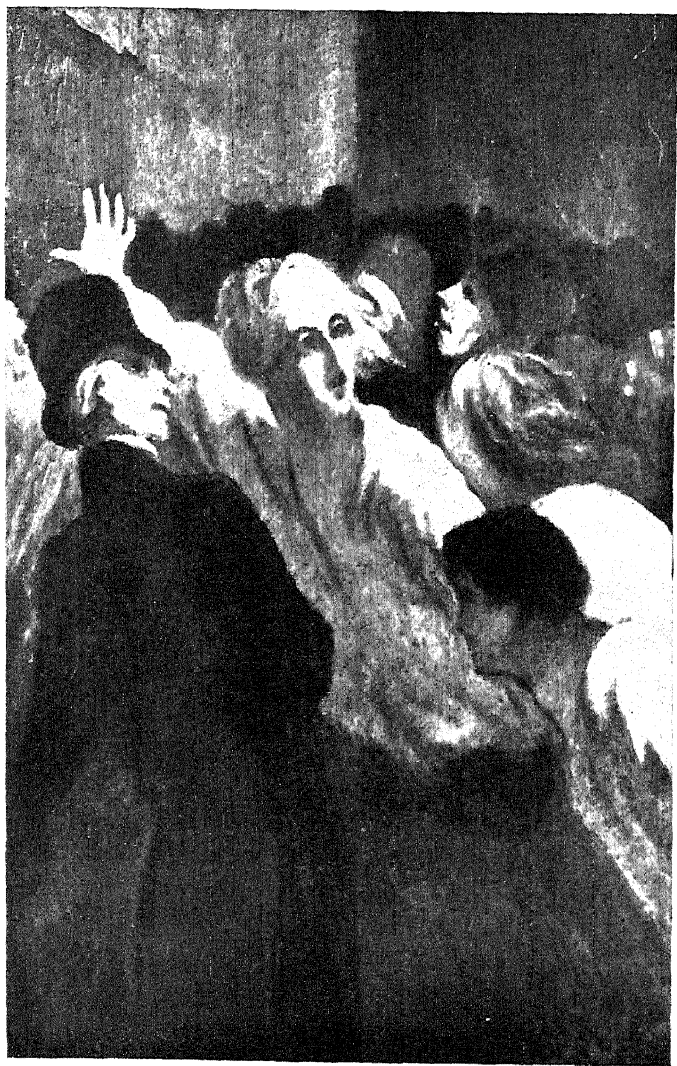


FIG. 112.—Scène de la Revolution. Daumier. Private Collection, London.



FIG. 113.—Romans of the Decadence. Couture. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 114.—Day Dreams. Couture.
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

here was a painter daring enough to picture reality and consequently his fame spread and many pupils came to him—Chavannes and Manet among them. Couture must have strengthened the thinking powers of his pupils to keep these two opposing men who stand for definite points of departure from tradition in painting.

Once grumbling before Chavannes' attempt to render flesh tints in a grey light he mixed his usual formula—white, Naples yellow, vermilion and cobalt—and touched up the picture. Puvis exclaimed, "What Monsieur Couture, is that the way you really see the world?" This ended the lessons for Puvis de Chavannes (see page 189).

As a teacher Couture never failed to hold his pupils up to the highest ideals, even if he fell short himself in reaching those ideals. He would say to them, "Go paint flowers as they grow in the fields; do not pluck them, for they wither and die." In "Day Dreams," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 114), his interpretation of the dreamy child is that of one who personally knew what those bubbles reveal to the imagination. That boy may have nothing in common with the base ball fan of the public school contest yet his visions may open to wider activity than the "fly" of the batter. Couture's dream of more romance without the extravagantly fantastic and

less classic without losing the spirit of classicism was in the right direction. But unfortunately the "meanest" is usually lacking in sparkle and falls flat because he is ordinary. This picture of a child, beautiful in physical development and graceful in pose, does not hold the interest because the rendering is neither realistic nor romantic—it is commonplace lacking the element of life.

CHAPTER XVI

MEISSONIER—PILS—DELAUNAY

JEAN - LOUIS - ERNEST MEISSONIER (1815-1891) is another French artist born in the city of Lyons. Again and again has Genius stopped at a home in this city and made the world its debtor by its visit. True little Jean early left his native place and settled in Paris with his parents, but, fortunately, the beauty and aliveness of Lyons never lose their hold on the men and women leaving the city.

We know very little of Meissonier's early life except that it was full of struggle and discouragement. His mother, from whom he inherited his artistic instinct, died when he was young and his father determined he should be a chemist like himself. Finally at seventeen Jean begged for three hundred francs promising that nothing more should be heard from him until he had made a name. His father gave him the money with the not very encouraging remark, "Very well, try your hand at painting, but let us under-

stand each other. I give you a week to find a master, and a year to show that you really have talent. At the end of that time, if you have not succeeded, I withdraw my consent, and back you go to the shop." Needless to say that he never went back to the shop.

Meissonier proceeded to break all rules of progress in learning to paint, for his first picture at twenty-five was technically as perfect as those of mature years; and his last pictures show no diminution in the skilful handling of his brush though he was seventy-six. This picture of "The Brawl" (*La Rixe*), owned by King George of England (Fig. 115), done when Meissonier was thirty, is one of his very finest paintings. He had been doing numberless tiny masterpieces which had captivated the public and immediately brought him great fame. Then the critics, ever ready with destructive remarks, intimated that he could not paint action. The picture scarcely catches our eyes before we are drawn into the brawl as though we too were as much a part of the quarrel as the men looking in at the door. It is said that Meissonier requested his model, the one in white, to make every effort to free himself from the two stout men in order that he might paint truthfully the muscular strain of



FIG. 115.—La Rixe (The Brawl). Meissonier. Royal Palace, London.

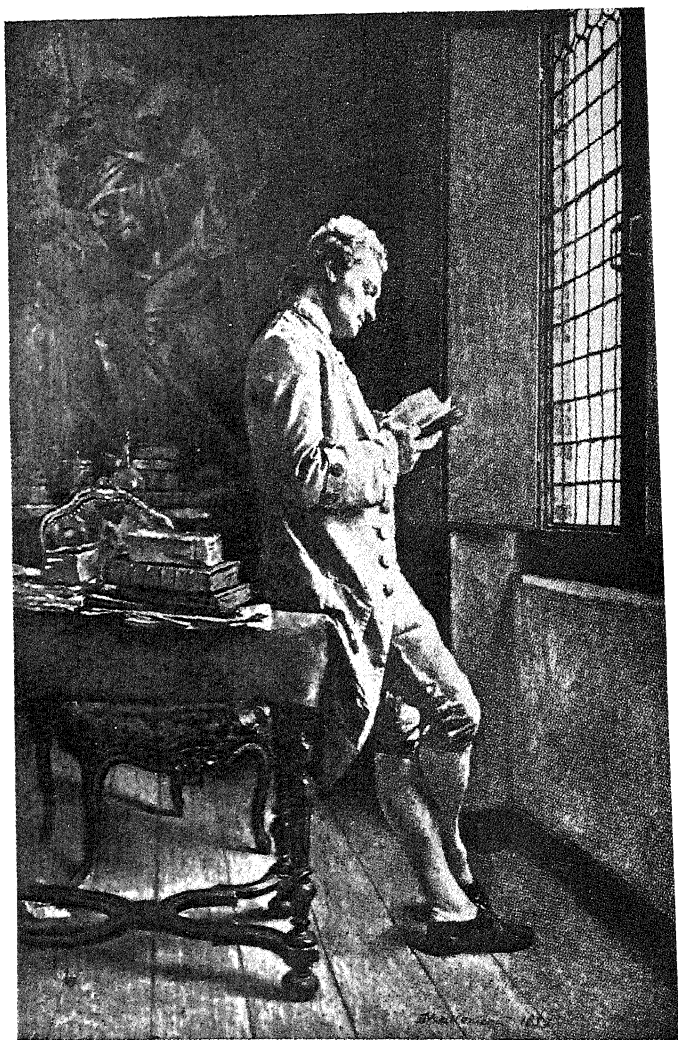


FIG. 116.—The Reader in White. Meissonnier. Chauchard Collection, Paris.

really angry men in a fight—incidentally the model died from playing his part so well.

The secret of the artist's great success in portraying special incidents was his ability to bring the scene absolutely within his own mental vision as though he were an actual eye witness himself. Although "The Brawl" represents a brawl among men of the early seventeenth century the spirit of it is of the artist's time whenever he lived. If you study the wonderful arrangement of those struggling men you will see how adroitly the action is centralized in the outstretched hand threatening the nearing face of the furious assailant. The delicately moulded face and neck distorted with passion assailed by fingers as rigid as steel form a never-to-be-forgotten silhouette on our memory. "The Brawl" was painted in 1854 and exhibited in the Universal Exposition held in Paris. It was bought by Napoleon III and presented to Prince Albert during the visit of Queen Victoria and her Consort to Paris.

Messiaen's marvellous power in painting details has out-Dutched the Dutch. It makes no difference whether his pictures are composed of many figures or one the same painstaking work in elaborating brass buttons, delicate filigree ornaments and perfect costuming is evident. But with all his microscopic details Meissonier is

never petty. The next year after he painted "The Brawl," in 1857, this incomparable little picture, "The Reader in White" (*Le Liseur Blanc*), Chauchard Collection, Paris (Fig. 116), commanded unbounded praise and gave him world-wide fame. It is only a fourth longer than the reproduction yet it is a scene so complete, so Frenchy, so realistic, so altogether charming that the French critic, M. André Michel, says, "It is in his single figures, his monologues, that Meissonier attains perfection." The artist painted many of these "Readers," no two alike and each with the vitality of a personal entity. What a privilege to own one of these little masterpieces. We wonder how it was possible to paint anything so perfect as "The Reader in White." We go over it with our magnifying glass and then examine it across the room from us. It is exquisite in its perfection. The composition with this simple figure is as technically true as it is in "Friedland, 1807" (see Fig. 117) with its many figures. Regardless of the interesting accessories we are held with the reader himself. His expression is that of one whose mind is seeing more than he reads. He has opened the book at random and finding it interesting rests against the table half sitting half standing, an attitude common with men searching for some

special bits of information. What cares he that the light is directly on his face—Meissonier is bigger than the laws of lighting when he has found a choice morsel to tickle his fancy. The furnishings in these little pictures of “readers” are exactly suited to those who find pleasure in reading. That table alone is a most interesting study in still life. Those well thumbled leather bound books and ragged pamphlets on the green velvet cover that hangs against the glittering mahogany legs of the table, and the chair arouse our curiosity. The light that comes boldly in at the window and floods the reader from top to toe plays hide-and-seek with those books as though it, too, would peep between the covers.

While Meissonier’s series of “Readers” have many features in common—the window is always on one side and the table cover, books and papers are much the same—yet these pictures are never monotonous. All his compositions are interesting whether they contain dozens of figures or one because never for one moment does he let his own interest flag in what he is painting. It is simply impossible to catalogue Meissonier. He had no dealings with the classicists—although his exact, precise, almost photographic reproduction of things would have put them to shame—neither would he join the ranks of the roman-

ticists, yet his breadth of view in natural scenes and his keen understanding of visions vizualized well might have been their despair.

Meissonier painted a series of Napoleonic pictures representing the great general at various stages of his campaign. The largest and most noted of these paintings is "Friedland, 1807," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 117). A heated controversy among prominent critics as to the merit of the picture is easily aroused. One faction will assert that it is the artist's finest achievement," the other that it is, "one of the worst pictures he ever painted." However the artist himself cherished it as his masterpiece. The picture was painted for A. T. Stewart—the famous merchant of New York City who had the temerity to start a dry goods store away up town on Tenth Street in 1862. He paid \$60,000 for it. Meissonier worked on "Friedland" fourteen years. It is said that he bought a field of growing wheat and hired a troop of cuirassiers and riding with them charged through the field that he might note the action of the horses and riders in trampling the grain and breaking the earth clods. Meissonier's own words best describes the picture. He says,

"I did not intend to paint a battle, I wanted to paint Napoleon at the Zenith of his glory; I



FIG. 117.—Friedland, 1807. Meissonier. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 118.—"1814." Meissonier. Chauchard Collection, Paris.

wanted to paint the love and the adoration of the soldiers for the great captain in whom they had faith and for whom they were ready to die. For the picture '1814' (see Fig. 118), the heart rending end of the imperial dream, my palette did not have colours sad enough; but in 'Friedland, 1807,' wishing everything to appear brilliant at this triumphant moment, it seemed to me that I could not find colours sufficiently dazzling. No shade should be upon the emperor's face to take from him the epic character I wish to give him—. The men and emperor are in the presence of each other. The soldiers cry out to him that they are his, and the great chief, whose imperial will directs the masses that move around him, salutes his devoted army."

Of "1814," Chauchard Collection, Paris (Fig. 118), the artist says, "When I made the sketch for '1814,' I was thinking of Napoleon returning from Soissons with his staff after the battle of Laon. It is the campaign of France, not the return from Russia, as has been sometimes suggested. For this theme I could scarcely find colours sad and subdued enough. The sky is dreary, the landscape devastated. The dejected, exasperated faces express discouragement, possibly even treachery."

M. Meissonier's son has told that his father

spared no time nor pains in his preparations to paint this scene. He waited long for the snow to fall and then he had the snow-covered ground trampled down by his servants; then broken up by heavy carts until the ruts were a mass of muddy snow. The weather was bitter cold but he set to work with his model on horseback. When he came to Napoleon the model was too large a man for the emperor's clothes but nothing daunted Meissonier put them on himself and found them a perfect fit, and mounting the white horse—from the imperial stables—with a mirror set up before him he painted that immortal figure of the defeated autocrat. The son says,

“The weather was intense; my father's feet froze to the iron stirrups, and we were obliged to place foot warmers under them and put a chafing dish near him, over which he occasionally held his hands.” The picture is about twenty inches high by thirty wide.

If Isidore Pils (1813-1875) had never painted any other picture than “Rouget de Lisle Chantant la Marseillaise,” now in the Louvre (Fig. 119), he would always be remembered. Never was a piece of music and verse written that so gripped the heart of a nation as “La Marseillaise.” It was terrible times in France when Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle (1760-1836), the young

captain of the Engineers, in a fit of enthusiasm wrote the song. He was dining at his friend Dietrich's, the mayor of Strasburg. The meal was only a small portion of soldier's bread, a little smoked ham—for a famine was in the land—and one small bottle of wine was found in the once bountiful cellar. Rouget went to his solitary room his brain and heart on fire with pity and love for his country. No sleep came but something was taking shape in his soul; hours went by when at last burst forth the air and words of the great national song. He took up his instrument and sang it through. Overwhelmed at the sublime inspiration his head dropped on his instrument and he slept until day broke. His friend Dietrich was overjoyed, for "the hymn of the country was found!" Alas, April 24, 1792, it was to be the hymn of terror too, for Dietrich, a few months later marched to the scaffold to its music. The song flew from village to village in popular opera. The city of Marseilles adopted it to be sung at the beginning and end of the meeting of clubs. At first it was called "*Chant de guerre l'armée du Rhine*," then "*Chant des Marseillaise*," and finally "*La Marseillaise*." It has been used in Salieri's opera "*Palmira*," in Grison's oratorio "*Esther*," in Shumann's song of the "*Two Grenadiers*." So familiar has this wonderful

music become that it awakens the most genuine enthusiasm for love of country in all parts of the globe.

It is probably that Pils knew Rouget personally—he was twenty-one when the song writer died—at least he had absorbed some of Rouget's spirit that brought forth the inspired music, for he stirs anew in us the love of country as we contemplate his picture of the memorable morning in the mayor's house.

Jules Elie Delaunay (1828-1891) was born in Nantes, that city so near the Atlantic ocean that the building and sending of ships must have fired the boy's mind with old world stories. One of his best known pictures is "The Pest at Rome," Luxembourg, Paris (Fig. 120). He treats the scene taken from the Golden Legend with such realistic details that one feels the deep hold of classic lore on the artist's mind. It is not a pleasant story he has chosen though he holds us with it. You may remember the legend. A terrible plague ravaged Italy during the reign of King Humbert. A good angel went from house to house striking the door one, two, three—a bad angel followed killing as many as the number struck. The dead were in number more than the living. Terror was on all until it was revealed to a rich man of Pavia that an altar erected to St. Sebas-



FIG. 119.—First Singing of the Marseillaise. Pils. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 120.—The Pest at Rome. Delaunay. Luxembourg, Paris.

tian would stay the plague. This was done and the body of the saint was brought from Rome. Delaunay shows the pestilence at its height with the good and bad angels still bringing disease. All stages of its progress lurk in the victims from the dead on the pavement to the women cursing the statue of Æsculapius and the wailing figures at the foot of the stairs. It is horribly inhuman, but what about the battle scenes of the war of 1870? Nothing could be finer than the artist's skill in rendering power in swift motion in the good angel and of intense force in the bad angel. His manipulation of the light is most interesting.

CHAPTER XVII

COURBET—HARPIGNIES—CAZIN— BOUDIN

TWO very individual French artists were born in 1819—Courbet (1819-1878) and Harpignies (1819-1917). Gustave Courbet, born in Ornans, died too soon to gain much credit for his views but Harpignies lived to have his work recognized and also to pass through many phases of French history to within a few months of the closing of the great world war. These men, coming at the time of the Barbizon movement, did not arouse the enthusiasm that was really their due. They, too, were breaking away from the Academic but their almost brutal frankness in interpreting nature was not so attractive to the general public as the more tender portrayal of the 1830 men.

It really was not necessary for Courbet to assume the rough exterior that he did in order to establish his genius. Emphasized eccentricities are after all nothing more than excessive selfishness—the ego grown to undue proportion in its own eyes. Courbet went so far in his self

importance as to defy not only all essential laws of polite society, but to assume that he was law even to the destruction of public property. The consequence was that after he caused the Vendôme Column to be thrown down the government exiled him and took his property to rebuild it—a most just judgment. Yet with all his distorted ideas of personal rights Courbet was really an artist of great merit.

When we look at "The Deer in the Forest," Institute of Art, Minneapolis, Minn. (Fig. 121), we find none of the brutal qualities that so provoked the antagonism of the French people. In some of his paintings he seemed to gloat in picturing scenes that would shock the sensibilities of society-bound Paris. But in this picture the artist is showing just what he saw with no comment as to the sentiment and no disturbing details. The forest is there and the lure of the depth is in the underbrush and crowded trees. The light playing over the glossy fur of the mother and her faun and creeping up the tree trunk is superb and yet no longing stirs within us. Art without sentiment is no more satisfying than social reform without the touch of human love and sympathy.

Courbet says of himself, "I am not only a socialist, but a democrat and a republican . . . and a sheer realist, which means a loyal adherent to

the *Verité vraie* (true truth)." When he exhibited in the Salon of 1850-1851—the year the realistic school of the nineteenth century had its birth—his paintings, particularly "A Burial at Ornans," in the Louvre, bore testimony to his being a "sheer realist." Among men and women represented in the picture, about forty of them, each a portrait, is Courbet's friend, Urbain Cuenot, mayor of his native town, Ornans. These marvellous portraits show to us likenesses so exact that each would be recognized, and sometimes because of an ugly imperfection of features. It seems as though Courbet even sought out the ugly mars to emphasize them. But Bastien Lepage (see page 283) was right in his estimate of the "Interment of Ornans," when he said, "There you have absolute truth, the truth of grief, a truth which we all of us feel."

As a landscapist Courbet shows his greatest skill, for in this the finer instincts of his nature are apparent. In his seascape, "The Wave," Louvre (Fig. 122), he gives a fine illustration of his power in handling attributes of nature, revealing them in a large free manner—he hated petty details. The black clouds and tumbling waves are simply elemental sources of power. No sentiment lurks in that devastating scene. The stranded boats are paying the penalty of being

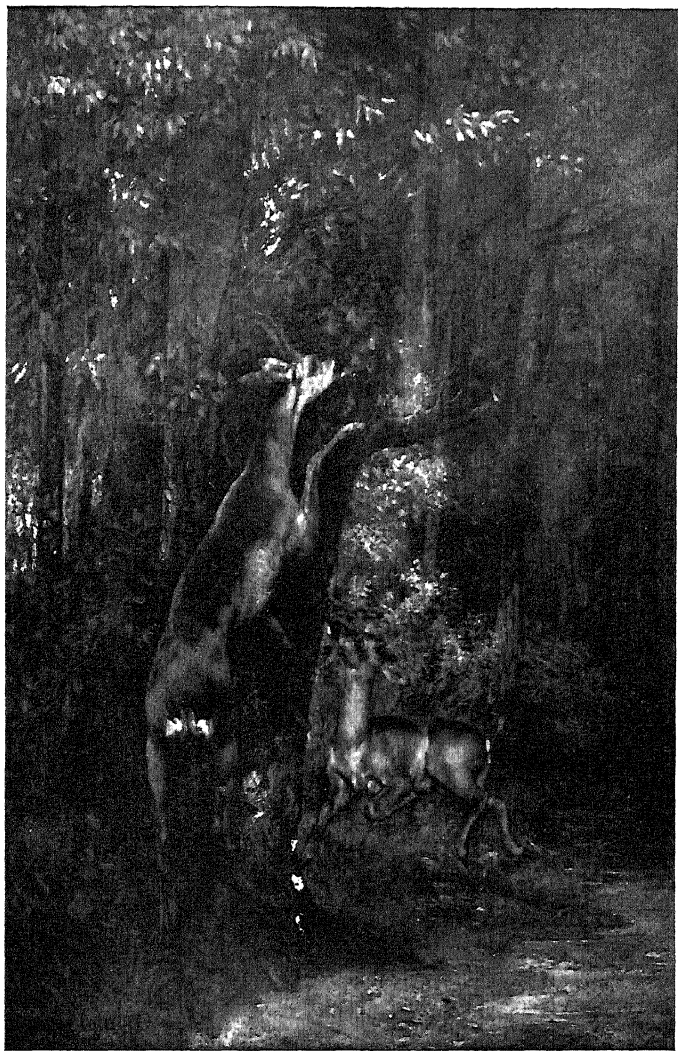


FIG. 121.—Deer in the Forest. Courbet. Courtesy of the Museum of Art, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

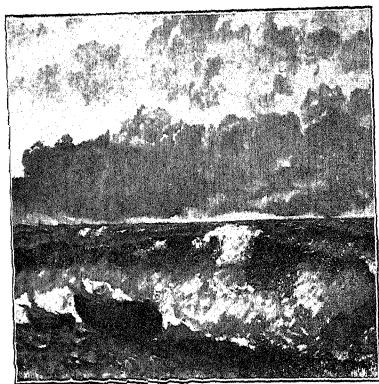


FIG. 122.—The Wave. Courbet. Louvre, Paris.



FIG. 123.—Village Girls. Courbet.

in the path of natural effects from specific causes. There is nothing in the picture to arouse the slightest emotion. Very different are our emotions when looking at Homer's "Gale," in the Worcester Museum of Art. In one nature bears no relationship to man; in the other man feels her power and becomes a part of it.

A very pleasing picture of Courbet's is "The Village Girls" (detail, Fig. 123). There is the same severe treatment in picturing the hillside, the sheer rocks falling into the black gulch and the straggling stream cutting its way through the meadow, yet the young women are exceedingly attractive, possibly because of the rugged setting. Courbet's dense shadows remind one of the late Italian though he avoids the excesses that marked those decadent artists of the Renaissance.

A strange friendship grew up between Courbet and Whistler—two artists as unlike as one could imagine. In 1865 the two spent the summer together at Trouville—the famous watering-place in Normandy near le Havre. These men apparently had little in common in the process of searching out elemental truths though each arrived at the same starting point of all truth, the mystery of nature. Courbet, with his unashamed frankness revealing ugly blots in all their hideousness and Whistler with keen cutting irony lay-

ing bare dressed up falsehood seemed to react on each other. We feel that possibly the bare facts of the one may have softened a little and the human element become stronger in the other.

No one can look at "The Woman with a Mirror" (Fig. 124), without recognizing a new element in Courbet's art—the personal equation. This woman, with the copper-coloured hair, is more to the artist than a woman's head adorned with a growth of tangled hair glittering at every angle like Dou's copper kettles. She is a human entity. Every feature of that face and every muscle in those hands express the widening power of the spirit governing them. Such women comprehend human life.

Henri Harpignies was not coarsely frank in his realism. Fundamental to him meant revealing the underlying cause not emphasizing the ugly results. The distorted growth of vegetable and tree under the stress of wind and weather makes us feel the tremendous grip on life of the tiny rootlets and the far reaching root trunks that held on regardless of whipping gale and beating hail. "The Cottage in the Wood," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 125), is not a specially homey place but a secure place and one fitting the environment. No storm, however terrible, could shake those walls; neither sunshine nor bird song



FIG. 124.—Girl with a Mirror.
Courbet.

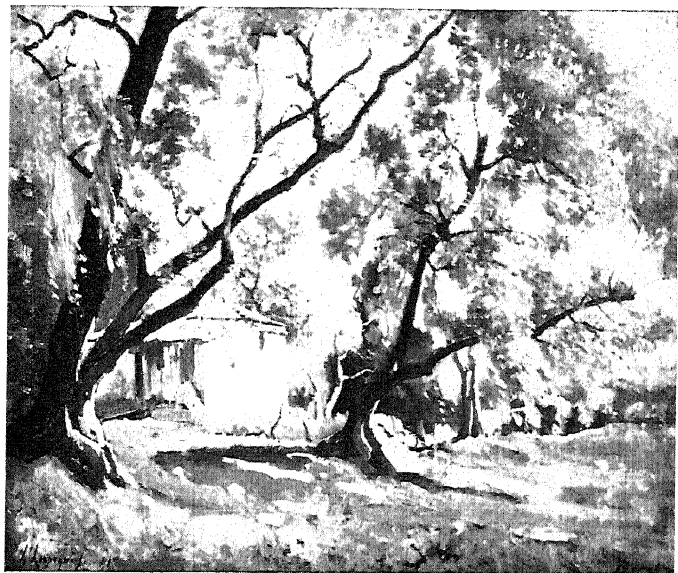


FIG. 125.—Cottage in the Woods. Harpignies. Courtesy of the
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

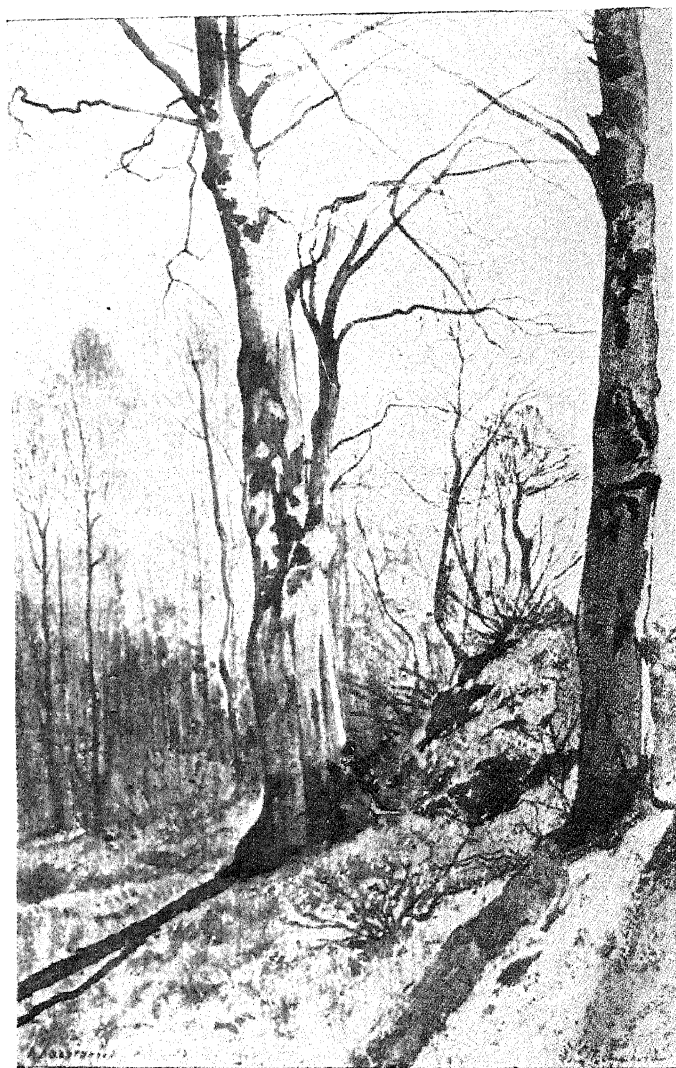


FIG. 126.—Winter Woodland. Harpignies. Petit-Palais, Paris.

could penetrate them. Those stern old trees though gnarled and bent certainly can smile under the golden radiance and I suspect feathered songsters gaily tip and balance on their rugged branches until every nook and corner of that desolate spot resounds to melody. The solid frame work of the cottage and trees give a sense of security that easily becomes a feeling of joy.

Harpignies was born in Valenciennes. His father, expecting him to become a business man, sent him out on the road to represent the firm in the interest of iron and sugar. As he travelled from village to village his mind and heart were full of the wonderful scenes he passed through and his note-book sketches were of wayside nooks and spreading trees instead of remarks on commerce and trade. At last his father, recognizing the hopelessness of making a tradesman out of an artist, allowed the boy, then twenty-seven, one hundred and fifty francs a month and sent him to Paris with the city druggist then Minister of the Interior. He was very slow in developing his talent and, at the suggestion of his master, A. Chard, finally went to Italy. Harpignies later said of his work there, "It was Rome which found, created, sustained me—and which sustains me still; it is to Rome that I owe not only my most noble emotions but my finest in-

spirations. That is what should be said above everything, that all who desire to learn can go there and face to face with beauty realize how enchanting it is."

The world will always be debtor to Harpignies for his sturdy good sense in water colour painting. He stamped out the wishy-washy methods of the past and opened our eyes to the real worth of water-colour pictures when properly painted. Such a water colour as "Winter Woodland Scene in the Allier," Petit-Palace, Paris (Fig. 126) is full of the strength and verve of old winter. Those buffeted sycamore giants are as unconcerned under the pelting of rain and snow as was Gulliver to the fisti-cuffs of the pigmies. Fresh and inspiring is each brush stroke in the hands of this master. For fourteen years he worked perfecting himself in this branch consequently no fumbling of purpose is found in his water-colour pictures. M. Leon Bonnat (see page 222) said of Harpignies, "With him there disappears one of the most glorious representatives of that admirable period of landscape painters who cast so much splendour on the French school."

Harpignies was very chary of the joy note, in fact one finds it only as one feels the permanence of verities. In "The Village Square, Hérissou,"

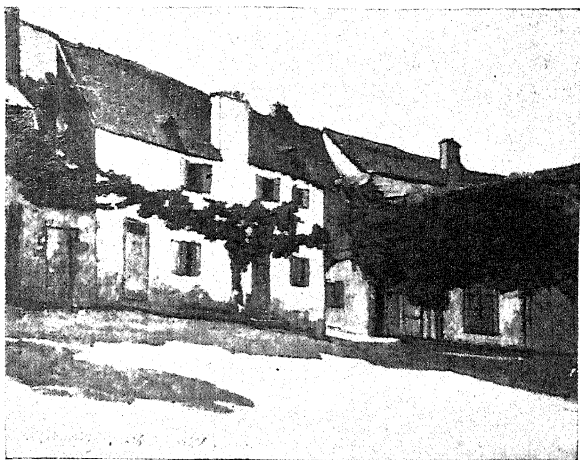


FIG. 127.—Village Square, Herisson. Harpignies. Petit-Palace, Paris.



FIG. 128.—Suburbs of Antwerp. Cazin. Courtesy of the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Petit-Palace, Paris (Fig. 127), the first impression is severity. Those houses stand four square to the public with no semblance of having yielded an inch in the hundreds of years since they were placed there. But lurking around the corner of the exact right angle a tiny grape began to grow—a note of joy! and the artist expands that joy-note until every living, moving creature in that ancient village sports under that vine. Harpignies is a master. He has led us bit by bit until he has compelled us to see a beauty of joy in gnarled and battered life that continues to function naturally after coming through storms.

The artist spent many years along the banks of the river Allier. He loved this shallow river. Its sandy bottom and rocky sides; its small islands and sleepy villages were ever giving him a deeper understanding of man and nature. The quaint old ruined châteaux fittingly placed and artistically built were constant reminders of the intimate relationship that existed between the builder and material things in those far off days. His Salon pictures of the 1872 exhibition, "The Ruined Château of Hérisson," is a fine example of artistic understanding. There it stands high above the river on a rock foundation. The building as substantial as the rock itself, a picturesque finish-

ing of nature's work. What a pity that the vandalism of man must destroy what was almost a part of nature herself.

Harpignies' love of trees, particularly the oak, gave him the familiar name of "Old Oak." When under the influence of his "oaks" we are again reminded of that quaint old legend of the young nobleman and the monks of Dümwald. To outwit their unjust claim on his land the young man promised to relinquish his hold on the land if he were allowed one more harvested crop. He sowed acorns. Monks came and monks went and still the land remained in the nobleman's family.

A realist of an entirely different order was Jean Charles Cazin (1841-1901).

He was decidedly individual if he was at times a little prosaic in that ever present envelop of blue-grey haziness, yet he was himself. In the painting of a "Suburb of Antwerp," Carnegie Institute, Pittsburg (Fig. 128), the rank growth along the stream and the old rambling house are perfectly harmonious in the grey atmosphere. And the lovely light from the sun-lit sky reflected in the turbulent stream gives a note of gladness that makes the whole scene sing with joy. Cazin was a very rapid painter and some of his compo-



FIG. 129.—Hagar and Ishmael. Cazin. Luxembourg, Paris.

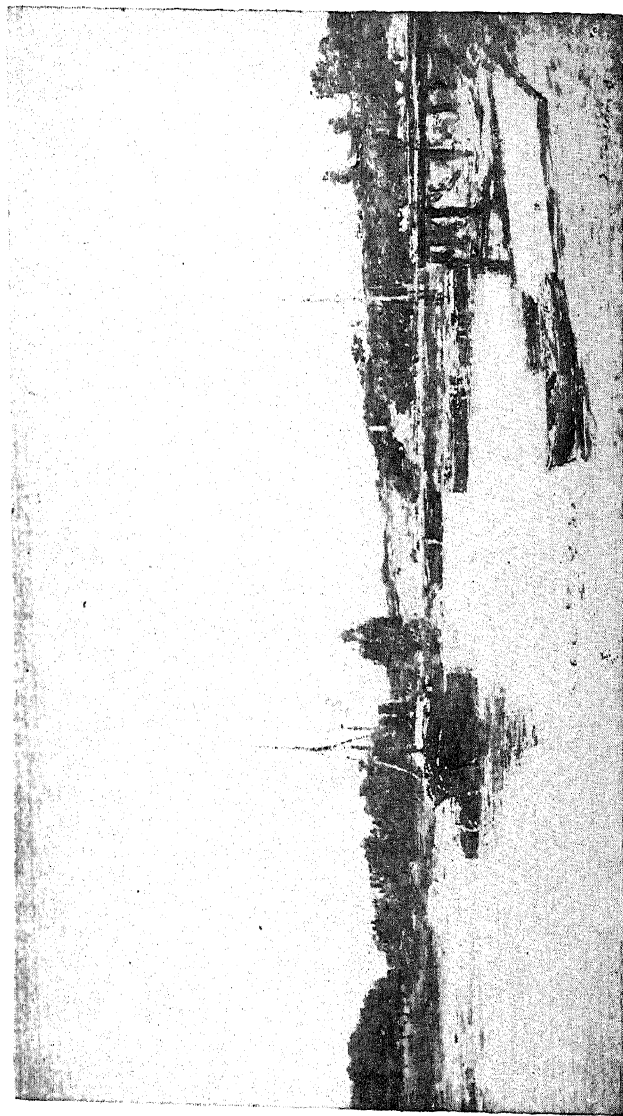


FIG. 130.—Inner Harbor. Boudin. Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

sitions show a lack of care that detracts from their real value as works of art.

One might say that Cazin very nearly belonged to the original Barbizon men. Though he was not a landscapist pure and simple yet his figure pieces all have a natural setting full of poetry and are exceedingly individual. He delighted in using a simple palette of limited range and then by sheer personality he produced works full of originality. Often his desert scenes as in "Hagar and Ishmael," Luxembourg, Paris (Fig. 129), are mere seashore sand dunes with little of desert expanse in them yet the feeling of desolation is there and gives emphasis to the deserted mother and son. Perhaps no one understood the sandy waste along salt water fronts better than Cazin and surely no one felt a keener more poetic sympathy toward mother earth struggling to clothe her restless body with verdure. He lived for many years at Boulogne-sur-Mer, where he owned a line of desert tracts, and there the varying lights and shadows and the constantly shifting sand and clouds played on his poetic nature. His desert scenes are the antithesis of Balzac's idea of a desert where "God is and man is not."

It is not surprising that Eugène Boudin (1824-1893) loved the sea. He was born at Honfleur

overlooking the harbour of Le Havre, in Calvados. Constantly ships were coming and ships were going and the sea as constantly was changing its mood. Sometimes Boudin chose the outer Harbour with its hustle and bustle. Then a more quiet scene suited him better and he painted the "Inner Harbor, at Valery," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 130). His many years in Paris, where he died, never marred his love for the sea. A loving note of human comradeship is in his coast scenes. A peculiar tenderness draws the seafarer to the tiny homes in the inlet. Boudin combined lightness of touch with a steady, firm grasp of rugged principles. There is nothing weak in the quiet of these sea-going ships. The palpitating strength of endurance is as evident in them as in the spit of land that holds the water in check. An atmosphere, rife with life, envelops the low lying land and water and sky.

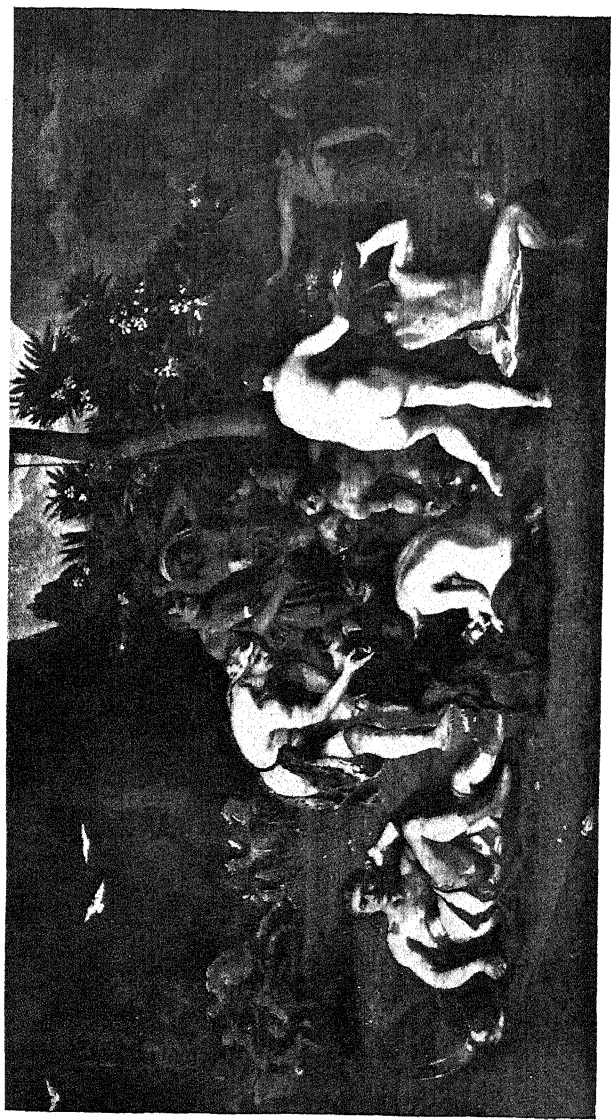


FIG. 131.—Peace. Chavannes. Museum de Picardie, Amiens, France.



FIG. 132.—The Childhood of Saint Genevieve. Chavannes. Pantheon, Rome.

CHAPTER XVIII

PUVIS DE CHAVANNES

WITH Pierre-Cécile Puvis de Chavannes (1824-1898), mural painting in France reached its height. And how he fought to bring it about, and how the public laughed! For nearly a decade he sent picture after picture to the Salons only to be rejected and ridiculed. At first his paintings were easel pictures, most of them showing his absorption of the old masters in the Louvre and in Italy. He was young and of course he was giving out largely what he had taken in but Puvis himself was growing.

A very commonplace opportunity came to him when he was thirty—simply blank panels on the walls of his brother's country home. But these blank panels "tempted him," as he said, and when he was through with them the public ceased laughing and began to admire. His own words about this work, are:

"One of these subjects I repeated on a larger scale for the Salon of 1859, calling it, 'Return from Hunting.' It was accepted; and so de-

lighted was I that I presented the picture to the museum of Marseilles; and it occurred to me that something might be done in this mural style of painting."

His first definite mural paintings, "Peace," and "War," he sent to the Salon of 1861. They were accepted and "Peace" (Fig. 131) was bought by the government but Puvis, not wishing the panels separated, gave its companion "War," also to the authorities. Eventually these panels were given to the city of Amiens for the New Musée de Picardie. It is only by following the artist through his process of elimination beginning with these panels to his perfected mural decorations (see Fig. 135) that we can understand the bigness of his conception of wall painting.

The first thing that strikes us in his pictures is the colour. That soft, delicate harmonizing of nature's spectrum until the original red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple and violet have sunk into and become a part of the thing decorated. His principle from the beginning was that mural painting must be a part of the wall and harmonize with the architectural finishings. This was a startling innovation. When his timid, thin toned pictures were hung by the side of the full toned, garish coloured ones of other artists his were

eclipsed and quietly sank into oblivion. But when Puvis' pictures were in their rightful place and other artists essayed to have their pictures there too the verdict was against the intruders and they fled screaming with pain.

But let us look a moment at "Peace," and see wherein Puvis is just beginning his crusade in mural painting. The huddled figures! Yes, that is the weak point. In the foreground and background he has assembled crowds to represent a nation at peace—later he told a bigger story in "Winter" (see Fig. 133), with few figures yet the whole race is involved.

Again, in "The Childhood of Saint Genevieve," Pantheon, Paris (Fig. 132), he has brought together many persons but how different the result. The central figure the child Genevieve is the *cause* the others simply emphasize the reason why. It is a beautiful story that the artist tells about the patron saint of France in a series of pictures on the walls of the Pantheon. Saint Genevieve was born in Nanterre, a small town a few miles west of Paris, in 422. When she was about seven years old the Bishop of Auxerre, St. Germanus, and the Bishop of Troyes, St. Loup, passing through Nanterre, stopped to spend the night. The people gathered to give homage of St. Germanus, for he was a noted

prelate. The little Genevieve came running with the crowd to see the great man. When St. Germanus saw her coming he perceived the sign of God's hand on her and as he talked he saw that her knowledge was of one inspired of God. Very simply the story is told. The child, the father and mother and the two bishops make a never-to-be-forgotten picture. The other figures, the mother and the child, the feeble couple, the child in supplication and the mourning women supplement but do not detract from the central interest. The bit of realism in the foreground is beautiful. We will see St. Genevieve again (see Frontispiece).

In the Hôtel de Ville, Paris, is Chavannes' "Winter" (Fig. 133). The grouping of the figures is truly wonderful. Various centres of interest! yes, but how each is bound to the whole. The spell of winter reduced to its lowest terms regardless of time or country is in the air. Each scene is perfect in itself yet they are all under the stress of the Frost King. Easily the sensations of joy in the strength of workmen and pity for the starving child, of comfort in the well-clad overseer and exultation in the flying horsemen follow each other. The harmony of colour that fits the scene into the very wall itself is a constant joy.

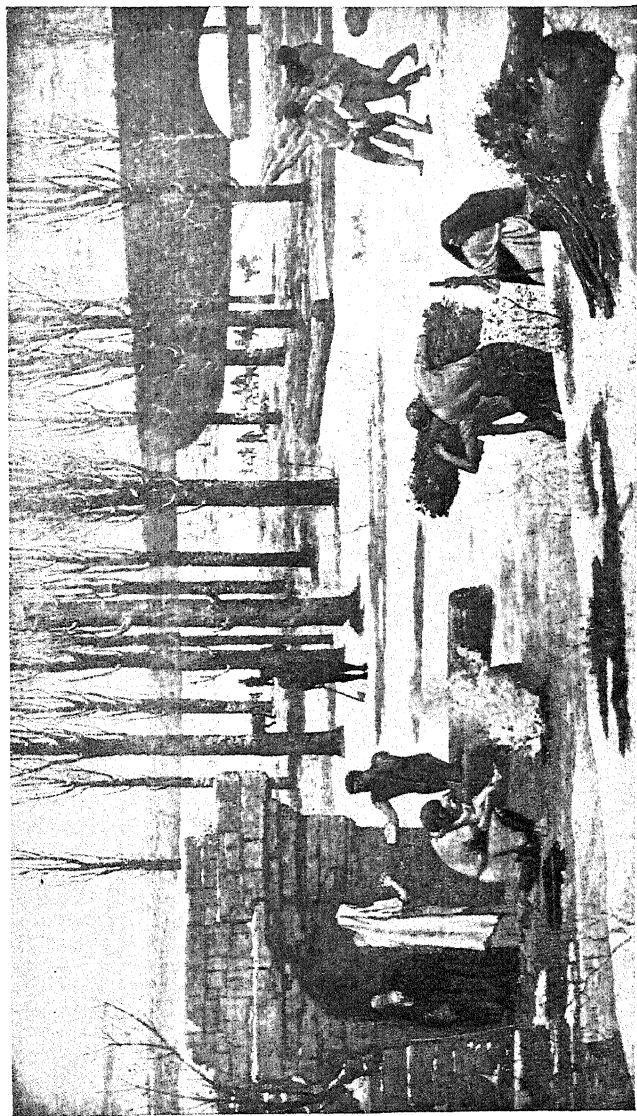


FIG. 133.—Winter. Chavannes. Hôtel de Ville, Paris.

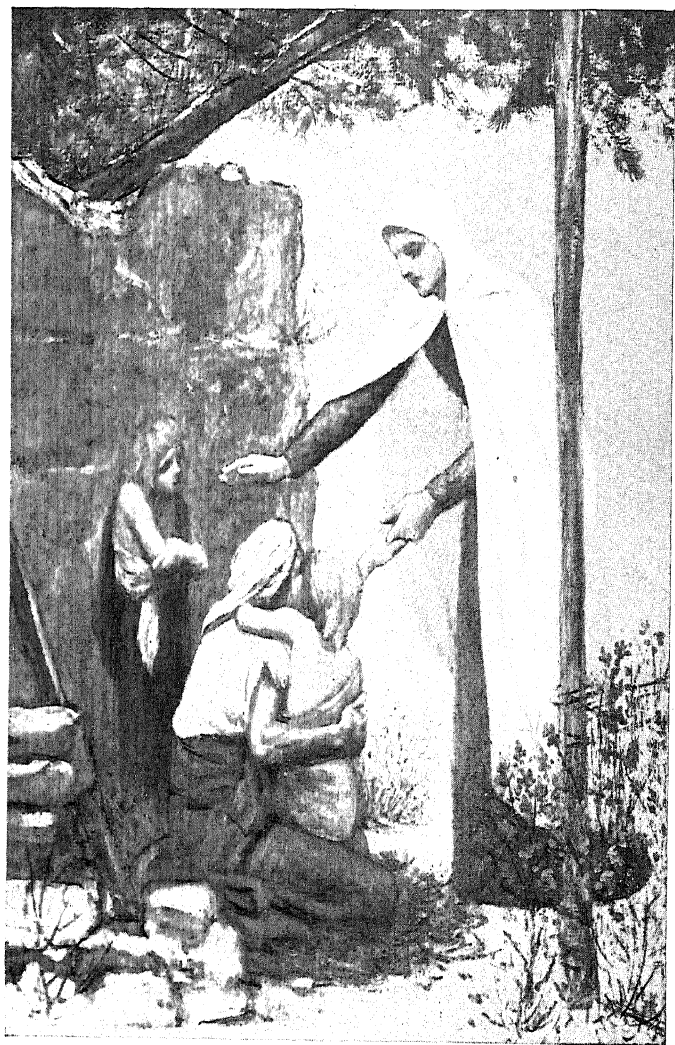


FIG. 134.—Charity. Chavannes. Courtesy of the City Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri.

Again we look at the pale flat-toned picture of "Charity," City Art Museum, St. Louis (Fig. 134), a feeling of peace because of harmony in design, in colour and in sentiment is ours. It is that of a perfectly tuned instrument. Surely with Puvis a new spirit came into the art of mural painting in France, a spirit that finally revolutionized that branch of decoration in Europe and America. We repeat that no one was willing to believe in this innovator, even when he demonstrated that the key-note of mural decoration is "its clinging to the surface, and its being easily taken in with the wall in the same key." Of course his pictures pale in colour and flat in tone were out of place, to say the least, among exhibitions at the Salons and naturally the committee could see no further than the Salon walls.

The "Sacred Grove," in the Sorbonne, Paris (Fig. 135), is considered not only Chavannes' masterpiece but one of the finest mural paintings in existence. The Sorbonne was founded in 1253 by the confessor of Louis IX, Robert de Sorbon or Sorbonne. It was originally intended for poor students of theology and their teachers. However, it soon acquired such high repute that it became the scholastic centre of theology and its name a synonym for the faculty and the Univer-

sité de France. Now it stands for the University of Paris. The "Sacred Grove" is on the end of the wall back of the stage in the amphitheatre, a hall holding 3500 persons. In the centre of the picture sits "the sorbonne" with two youths leaning against her holding laurel crowns and palm branches with which to reward the worthy. From the pure stream of learning flowing before her drink old and young. Eloquence declaims at her left and on either side are symbolized various forms of human expression; then philosophy, history and the sciences and at the left are workmen excavating antique remains. When in the presence of these allegorical people, placed as they are, in a setting so severe in arrangement and so pallid in colouring, we feel we are in the region of pure air, where life is clean and holy.

It seems as though the artist has reached the vanishing point in elimination in "The Poor Fisherman," Luxembourg, Paris (Fig. 136). Even the man himself is nearing the limit of endurance. Was ever forlorn hope more forcefully expressed? He still stands—waiting for what? Possibly for the mother and the child, but more likely because he does not know what to do while the sinking net fills. The desolateness of the surroundings would be unendurable but for the flowers and the little life lying among



FIG. 135.—Sacred Grove. Chavannes. Sorbonne, Paris.



FIG. 136.—The Poor Fisherman. Chavannes. Luxembourg, Paris.

them. The young woman with hands full of blossoms and arms outstretched toward the child brings a ray of hope that opens a bigger vision. The scene is laid at the estuary of the Seine, near Honfleur, a place Puvis used often to visit. The waste of grey water, the flat coast, the moored boat and the poverty stricken people were familiar sights—and to him they were a picture. A picture so illusive that we could not have caught it without him. This one is an easel picture painted in 1881 and bought by the French government in 1886.

Chavannes led a rather uneventful life except for the incidents that gathered around his various paintings. He had two studios, one in Paris and a large barn of a place at Neuilly, three and a half miles from the city. In the latter he painted his large works. He allowed no one to watch him at work, with one exception. When he was thirty the Princess Marie Cantacuzène came into his life. He loved her and she alone could sit by him. Her suggestions and criticisms were his inspiration for over forty years. Not until 1897 were they married after she had nursed him through a serious illness. But the next August she died and two months later he went to seek her.

As we look at "Saint Genevieve Keeping

Watch Over Paris," Pantheon, Paris (Frontispiece), where the Princess is the model, we realize the sweetness and the charm of the woman beloved of Puvis de Chavannes. You may remember that Saint Genevieve came many times to rescue Paris. It is said that she saved the city from the ravaging Hun, Attila, and Childeric had great reverence for her even before he was converted to Christianity, and that through her influence he built the first Christian church in Paris and forbade pagan worship. That she should be the guardian of Sleeping Paris is most appropriate and no one knew better than Puvis de Chavannes how to picture her lonely vigil. Her chamber may be on Notre Dame. The full moon, watching with her, spreads its soft glow over the city and illuminates the saint revealing her very soul to us. How calm and quiet she is as she broods over her beloved city. She seems to be saying, as did Wordsworth,

"Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will;
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!"

The artist painted this picture in 1898, the year he died, which gives to it a special sacredness as

a benediction to his beloved Paris. Then, too, his model being his own beloved wife, then about seventy, adds still greater preciousness to the scene.

Chavannes was born in Lyons—a city famous for the number of great men connected with it—Marcus Aurelius, Caracalla, St. Irenaeus, St. Ambrose, and in the past century Flandrin, Meissonier and then Puvis. The name Chavannes comes from Chavanne-sur-Suran, a commune of the canton of Treport, the place of the origin of the family, which traces its ancestors as far back as 1152.

It is not known just when Puvis began his art career but he went to Paris when he was twenty years old. His training under special teachers was very limited though he did spend a short time with Delacroix and a still shorter time in the atelier of Couture. After these two attempts at working under masters he struck out for himself in a studio in the Place Pigalle and there he worked until the year before he died. It is interesting to note that his mural paintings are done on canvas with a medium of wax and then fastened to the wall with white lead. Kenyon Cox sums up Puvis de Chavannes as "A classicist of the classicists, a primitive of the primi-

tives, a modern of the moderns—above all an individual and an original artist, and to copy his methods would be to learn ill the lesson he teaches.”

CHAPTER XIX

MOREAU—MONTICELLI—CABANEL—
BOUGUEREAU—GARDNER—
RIBOT

GUSTAVE MOREAU (1826-1898) is a man who stands alone in his individualism—an individualism that was a species of supreme selfishness. He had a wonderful colour sense and considerable talent but he was rich and independent—two attributes opposed to true art. Unfortunately he thought eccentricity meant originality and that distorted vision was imagination consequently he did not please his countrymen neither did he work to benefit art. His curious imaginings of old themes—myths, Bible legend and what not—were his own interpretation and usually did not fit the original in any respect.

“L’Apparition,” Luxembourg (Fig. 137), is a good example of his interpretation of a familiar Bible story with no regard to the text. Though the picture sparkles and twinkles as if set in precious stones its dramatic quality is cheap and tawdry compared to the word picture in the old

Book. The apparition is supposed to be the head of John the Baptist appearing to Herod as Salome is dancing before him. It is doubtful if Moreau ever heard of such a legend except as it came from his own brain.

Moreau was born in Paris and lived his life there. At his death his house, 14 Rue de la Rochefoucauld, and his pictures were let as a museum to the government in memory of himself—a gift of little value historically or artistically except as a reminder of the foolishness of man.

Adolphe Monticelli (1824-1886) was certainly a strange genius. His parents, Italian by birth, settled in Marseilles, France, shortly before Adolphe was born. The boy, steeped in the poetic surroundings of the sunny south, early developed a marvellous sense of the rhythmic quality of nature. Intuitively harmony became the keynote of his being. Balancing lines, harmonious sounds and blending colour played upon his sensitive being like the gentle breeze on the swaying harp. He ordered his own life like that of a noble Venetian; he dressed in velvet and wore a large grey Rubens' hat making a most distinguished appearance among his followers.

When Monticelli first began his painting he followed Raphael in the careful adjustment of line to the space filled. But after going to Paris



FIG. 137.—L'Apparition. Moreau. Luxembourg, Paris.

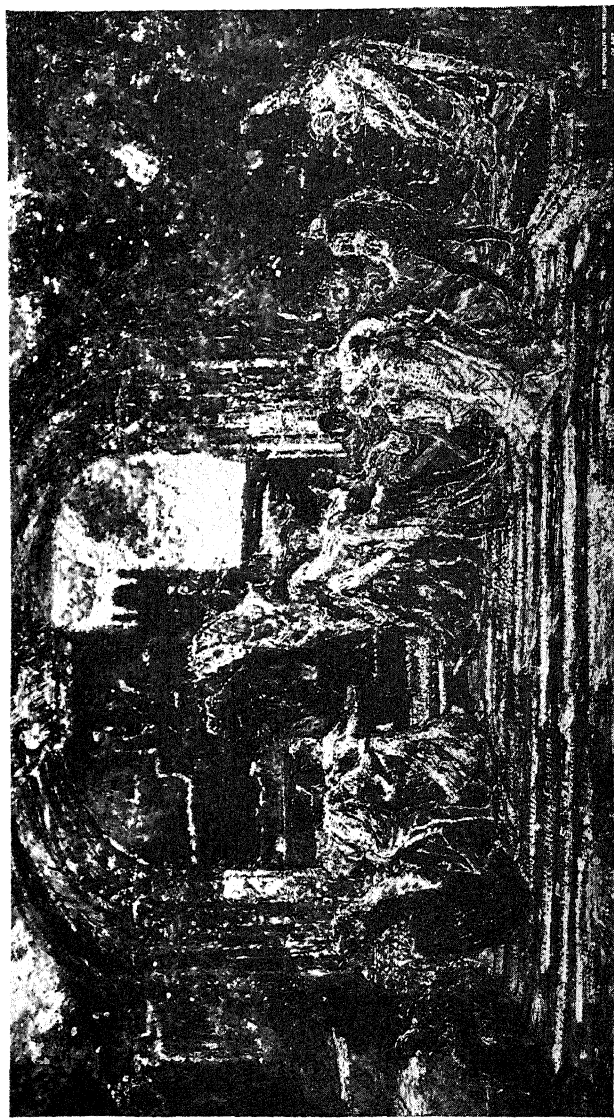


FIG. 138.—The Court of the Princess. Monticelli. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
New York City.

and coming under the influence of Delacroix his true rhythmic power came into play and colour became his medium of expression.

"The Court of the Princess," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 138), fairly sings with riotous joy over its richly dressed and jewel bedecked visitors. No lapidary ever spread out a more ravishing display of treasures than has this princess, in her brilliant coterie of lady attendants. Monticelli's brush seems bewitched with the magic of colour. Tuneful colour. Let your eyes rest on each dainty figure as they travel over the gathered company to comprehend how each tone blends and enriches its companions like the singing harmony of some old Venetian stained glass window. And then that setting of archway and terrace, and castle. Could anything express the soft radiance of Aladdin's sun-kissed castle like that? Surely the conjurer of our childhood has rubbed his lamp and spread this scene before us.

Monticelli lived and wrought in Paris until 1870 then he fled from the stricken city like a rat from a sinking ship, going back to his native city, Marseilles, where he lived in one room hung with a red curtain—his only furniture two chairs, a bed and his beloved easel. Is it any wonder that his glorious colour constantly dis-

solved itself into deep purple shadows which in turn gleam with the brilliant visions of his fertile brain? He dreamed colour; he breathed colour; he wrought colour. He piled on pigment as few impressionists dared to do. Blotches and dabs chase each other leaving rainbow tinted trails like May-day children dancing and circling around the pole.

If Monticelli fascinates with his colour Alexander Cabanel (1823-1889) ought to charm with his draftsmanship yet how insipid his perfection is against the sparkling imperfections of Monticelli. Cabanel illustrates perfectly the deadening influence of the cut-and-dried system of the French Academy of his time. In fact he himself as head professor in Ecole des Beaux Arts passed on the perfection that brings the Prix de Rome but kills progress. Many men of real power—Bastien Lepage and others—were among his pupils but with rare good sense they realized that growth was the struggle to attain, and they broke away in time to save their originality though ever remembering the personal charm of their beloved master.

Cabanel loved to portray unique historic episodes often choosing themes specially adapted to picturesque treatment. In his painting of "Cleopatra Testing the Poison on her Slave" (detail,

Fig. 139), there was great opportunity for originality as that particular historic incident had not been overdone by artists. It is evident from his portrayal of the effect of the poison on the slave—not shown in the illustration—that Cabanel did not agree with the popular belief that Cleopatra was poisoned by the sting of an asp. He probably believed that Plutarch and Rawlinson were more correct in their versions. They assert that she was found dead “without any mark or suspicion of poison on her body,” which certainly confutes the story of the asp or serpent sting. Then, too, conscious of her beauty her pride would have been outraged at the thought of being disfigured after death and why should she use an animal when there were so many quick acting poisons known. Doubtless the whole story grew out of the asp, an Egyptian emblem of royalty, carved on a statue or crown of Cleopatra carried in a triumphal procession of Augustus. Cabanel not only represents the asp on the queen’s crown but every detail of the picture is an exact reproduction of the Egyptian luxuriance of Cleopatra’s time. It should be interesting to note the various accessories of the scene but we are as indifferent as is the barbaric queen to the tragedy of her ordering.

Cabanel was born in Montpellier where Ca-

thedral, Academy, university gardens and factory is bathed in the artistic atmosphere of the Mediterranean. But how at variance with the freedom of the southland was his artistic training; with the same environment Monticelli was drinking in the essence that makes for true art.

Another artist of this semi-classic period was William Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905). Somehow the very name Bouguereau has become a synonym for insipid sweetness. One artist writer quotes an apt reply of one of Bouguereau's pupils to the enthusiastic layman congratulating him on his rare opportunity of being taught by so famous a man. "Yes, it is good to be well launched but I am distressingly tired of all that wax." His drawing was as correct as a Spencerian copy, but who has any pleasure in perfect lines without the personal element in it? Nothing in nature is perfect so why insist on perfection in man's handiwork? And yet all Academic training tends toward theoretical exactness rather than individual growth.

The practical value of progressive development is leaving the Academy trained theorist far in the rear, not that all practical ideas are of real value but they signify an aliveness that promises better things. The vigorous young French artists were growing exceedingly restive under the

regulated honour system which gave reputation—what people think of you—rather than character—what you are. This struggle of the growing men has toppled over the false standard of such men as Cabanel, Bouguereau and others who have been as gods to the people. Gradually the elemental principles of art that possessed the ancients has been entering into the modern artists and a new race of modern old masters is in process of growth.

Of course Bouguereau is not all bad in his art. We realize in his "Birth of Venus," Luxembourg (Fig. 140), that a certain purity of motive, combined with perfect line and correct flesh tints, pervades the scene, but who could live with those wax-like figures and feel any enthusiasm over life. Mr. Patterson, who was studying in Paris when this picture was exhibited in the salon of 1879, says, "The shocking rumour circulated in the studios and cafés that Bouguereau had caught himself in a false harmony and actually had glazed one of his figures to the proper tone. Horrible thought! On varnishing day we all ran to see the iniquity, and found no difficulty in identifying the sinning figure. . . . Tasteless good taste is his sin. Wonderful accuracy in drawing his glory."

A charming romance in Bouguereau's life was

his staunch fidelity to his lady-love our countrywoman, Elizabeth Jane Gardner, of Exeter, N. H., though out of deference to his mother's objection to an American wife he delayed his wedding nineteen years. When he became his own master at sixty-one they were married.

Miss Gardner was one of Bouguereau's pupils and naturally has absorbed many of his qualities though she retains some of her American enthusiasm. In "The Judgment of Paris," Luxembourg (Fig. 141), we recognize a child-like simplicity in the group that charms yet the painting is not a great picture. Most of her works have an element of truth that somewhat counteracts the coldness of accurate execution. But why expect two people who for twenty years subjected themselves to the whim of a third person to put into their pictures the exuberance of living. True art is the expression of the soul and if the soul is dwarfed the expression is not art.

Théodule Augustin Ribot (1823-1891) might be called the Franz Hals of France. He had that keen discernment of the underworld that distinguished many of the Dutch artists. Instead, however, of portraying Hille Bobbie with the coarse joke and the Cavalier with his hearty laughter, his people are more likely to show the physical suffering of want and abuse. Many

times his representation is disagreeably realistic though his technique is always strong and full of vitality. He pictures a simple Bible story, "The Good Samaritan," in the Luxembourg, Paris, as an example, but leaves nothing to the imagination. We read, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed leaving him half dead" (see St. Luke 10: 30). His black shadows and brilliant high light and pale flesh strongly remind us of Ribera while the realism in the brutal treatment is suggestive of the decadent Italian artists. But Ribot is no imitator of them; he responds to the tragedy of life, it is true, but his conceptions are full of the great problems that govern universal progress.

It took Ribot, however to humanize the martyrdom of Sebastian. In his "St. Sebastian," Luxembourg (Fig. 142), is real suffering. Somehow the usual picture with arrows pointing in every direction as they pierce the young saint's tender flesh scarcely cause a quiver even when devoted women are weeping at his feet. These good Samaritans, however, show real pity as they stoop by the lifeless body. Again we have the startling contrasts of light and shade in the dead body and the opaque shadows around it. It is

interesting to note how intimately the artist has worked out the bottom of the foot without in the least detracting from the painting as a whole.

Sebastian (A. D. 288), born of noble parents, was one of the earliest Roman martyrs. He was a favourite guard of Emperor Diocletian. When it was discovered that he had accepted the New Faith and could not be persuaded to give it up the emperor ordered him shot to death with arrows. He was left as dead but, found by his friends, he was nursed back to life. He again went to the palace and in sight of the emperor, —pled for the condemned Christians. The astonished ruler, cried, "Art thou not Sebastian?"

"I am Sebastian," said he, "whom God has delivered from thy hand that I might testify to the faith of Jesus Christ and plead for his servants." This time the infuriated ruler ordered him flayed to death and his body cast into the Cloaca Maxima. Again his friends found him but only to bury his body in the Catacombs.

Théodule Ribot was born in Saint Nicolas, a small village in Eure a few miles northwest of Paris. The Eure section is often called the granary of France. The artist could as easily paint genre pictures as religious subjects, and excel in portraits as in historical scenes yet a sombre undertone runs through all his pictures.

He really stood apart from the other men of his time; not that he inaugurated a new method of painting, rather it was his own personality expressed in painting.

CHAPTER XX

BONHEUR—VAN MARCKE—LEGROS—
JULIEN DUPRÉ—VOLLON

ROSALIE MARIE BONHEUR (1822-1899) was not a great artist. I sometimes wonder if she had been a man would her paintings have brought such recognition. Not that women are less talented than men, especially French women, far from it, but a great genius is simply a unique personality demanding recognition. It is strange, however, that with the long list of brilliant women—queens, stateswomen, philosophers, financiers, scientists, writers, helping all down the centuries to mould and build this marvellous nation there should be so few, so very few women artists on the list and they scarcely masters standing alone on individual merit.

Rosa Bonheur fought her way to recognition from the beginning of her art career in early childhood. She was never a student in school but always a student of life. One of her first forms of amusement was cutting figures from paper. She herself describes this early work.



FIG. 143.—Plowing in Nivernais. Bonheur. Luxembourg, Paris.



FIG. 144.—Barbara After the Hunt. Bonheur. Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia, Pa.

She says, "First I made long strips of paper, then with my scissors I cut out the shepherd, then the dog, then the cow, the sheep and finally the tree, always in the same order." From her earliest recollection she was drawing outlines on the walls of her father's studio and burying her tiny hands in the moist modelling clay as she formed all sorts of funny figures. Her first and only teacher was her father, Oscar Raymond Bonheur, who, to support the family, gave drawing lessons in Bordeaux, where Rosa was born.

Every expedient was tried to induce this free child of nature to pore over books but like Fra Lippo Lippi she was not cut out for a student of literature. Various industrial schools were tried even to needle-work until finally she was placed in a boarding school in rue de Renilly, Paris. But very shortly this restraint was too much for the irrepressible Rosa. To while away the time and amuse the girls she made coloured caricatures of the teachers and carefully cutting them out, stuck them to the ceiling with pellets of bread. This was shocking the dignity of the teaching hierarchy so Rosa was condemned to bread and water though the mistress of the establishment had the wit to slyly collect and save the iniquitous drawings, possibly realizing something of their merit. Later these same drawings of the said

Rosa became one of the most valuable assets of the school. The authorities would point with pride to them as works of the famous Rosa Bonheur who was once a dear pupil among them—the ways of fortune are indeed fickle.

However when we stand before Rosa Bonheur's "Plowing in Nivernais," Luxembourg (Fig. 143), the wisdom of the French government in purchasing the painting is unquestioned. This one picture justifies the public recognition that came to the painter in her own day and on this picture rests her fame as an artist-painter. She has here gripped the heart of the lover of the soil whether he be a bank president or a tiller of the ground. Oxen are the élite workers of Normandy. Even the hurried glimpses of them framed in by car windows command respect and admiration and when portrayed by one who loved them and knew their every mood and caprice—for oxen are as captious as women at times—the pictures become one of our valued mental possessions. Look how well she understands the shirking tendency of the middle pair of oxen. They are splendid fellows capable of the most effective efforts yet responsive only to coercives of tongue and thong. The mellow upturned soil rich in its fertilizing power is still holding the earth damp, the quivering atmosphere gathers

to itself the fresh odours and then spreads them far and near over the whole scene. Even the far hillside and the smiling clouds have scented the joy of the new crop that is starting with these slow moving oxen. Wise France today is beginning to rejoice again under just such a simple process of adjustment.

We are not unmindful that "The Horse Fair," painted in 1853, is the picture that brought Rosa Bonheur greatest fame especially in America. That it was one of the first originals from Europe exhibited in this country—and the first by a woman—may account in a measure for its popularity. Before painting this picture Rosa Bonheur spent many days and weeks, dressed in male attire, visiting horse fairs in the various county towns around Paris, to give to the scene the atmosphere of a real fair. Her self imposed early training in the slaughter-houses had given her a thorough knowledge of joints, muscles and tendons and the play of the skin under action. She became a familiar personality among the drovers and butchers who often insisted on "standing treat to the clever little fellow" making such true pictures of their animals.

Rosa Bonheur was born in Bordeaux—the city in the southwest of France important in the political and commerical history of France from

the time of the Romans until today. Rosa spent the first six years of her life in Bordeaux then her father moved to Paris. After she was well established as an artist she bought an estate at By at the east end of the Forest of Fontainebleau where she made her home until her death in 1889.

Although Rosa Bonheur for convenience dressed in men's clothes when at work and wore her hair short she never assumed a masculine manner of life or speech. One time a friend, who was visiting at By while the artist was still living told me that one day she was on the veranda of their boarding house when a medium sized woman, with small hands, regular features and particularly bright dark eyes came and sat beside her. Soon they began a friendly chat and discussed for some time general topics with much interest and animation. You can imagine my friend's surprise when she learned later that it was Rosa Bonheur with whom she had spent such a delightful space of time.

The picture of "Barbara After the Hunt," Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia (Fig. 144), has such an intimate ring to it that we are convinced Barbara was a personal friend of the artist. We too, feel the physical exhaustion of the splendid creature but realize that her mental attitude toward the hunt is as keen and unerring as

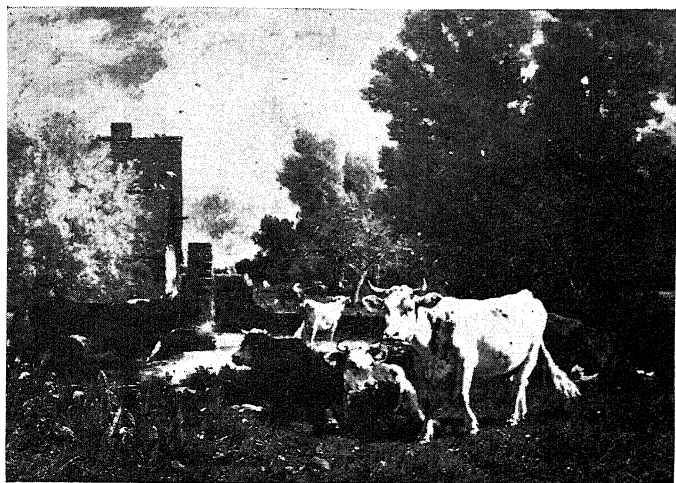


FIG. 145.—The Mill. Van Marke. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 146.—Edge of the Wood. Legros. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

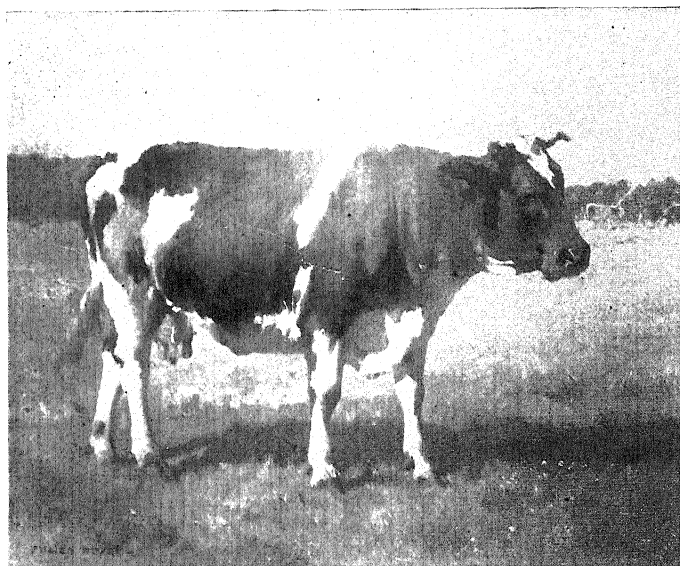


FIG. 147.—Cow. Julien Dupré. Courtesy of the Institute of Art, San Francisco, California.

ever. Rosa Bonheur's originality in intent and composition of this picture raises it to a high standard of excellence. The droop of the body so suggestive of a natural relax after excessive strain is well carried out in those bracing legs and the pull of the heavy head on the detaining chain. The simplicity of the picture is its strength.

As a woman Rosa Bonheur stood and still stands for all that is womanly and as an artist she is the first woman to receive *Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur des Arts*. This honour was proposed in 1855 but refused "Because she was a woman." Ten years later (1865) when Emperor Napoleon III decided her sex should not interfere with her receiving the cross, the Empress Eugenie came to her studio and says the artist, "Saluting the new knight with a kiss, she pinned the decoration to my black velvet jacket."

Rosa Bonheur is buried in Père Lachaise, Paris, the sacred memorial ground of so many immortal souls.

The slight resemblance of the works of Emile Van Marcke (1827-1890) to the paintings of Constant Troyon, his master, is really the merit which marks him as a painter. One of the strange freaks that fortune plays in establishing the standing of an artist is the blind alleys she leads public opinion into before allowing it a

balanced judgment. Because Van Marcke's cattle pieces or landscapes with cattle are more often found in cheap reproductions in America than the animal pictures of any other French artists is no reason for judging them as works of art. Even "The Mill," Metropolitan Museum, of Art (Fig. 145), which has some merit cannot hold its place with the Barbizon men. The storm clouds and the mill, the splendid dun cow in the stream and the cattle grazing in the meadow have all the elements of a live country scene yet the vital force that sets vibrating those particular elements is not there and the scene is simply commonplace.

Alphonse Legros (1837-1911) was another follower of the 1830 innovators in landscape painting. Though he never reached their standard of excellence he was an artist of considerable power. Legros was born in Dijon, that old town noted for its historic interest, and as the native place of many celebrated men. Legros studied at the Beaux Arts in Paris and early in his career went to London where he became professor of fine arts at the University College, London. He first attracted notice to his art by a portrait of his father, then his painting of "The Angelus," was greatly admired. His "Edge of the Woods," Metropolitan Museum

of Art (Fig. 146), is reminiscent of Dupré-Rousseau-Diaz treatment, yet only in catching the new note that came in with the group rather than copying them.

That Julien Dupré's (1851-1910) "Cow," Institute of Art, San Francisco (Fig. 147) is a fine animal no one will question but that she attracts because of her originality as does Troyon's "Cow at the Drinking Place" (see Fig. 101), is unthinkable. One is a cow from a well kept dairy herd where each cow is kept up to the standard of excellence in milk quality and the other is as individual in her likes and dislikes as are the family cows on the old farm homestead. Troyon put his intruder in his pictures because it was her sweet will to be there and it was either paint her or change his point of view. Dupré has deliberately made a portrait likeness of this cow. Julien Dupré was born and died in Paris.

Not since Chardin's day (see page 32) has a painter of still life equalled Antoine Vollon (1833-1900). Inanimate objects seem to spring into life because his brush sets free the atomic centre of force. Nothing was still life to Vollon; everything palpitated with the vitality of his genius. To him corn basket and chickens lived as great teeming forces of nature. In his picture of "A Farm Yard," Metropolitan Museum

of Art (Fig. 148), he has combined the elements that make up all farm yards in real life with that familiar something making this special farm yard. The low irregular buildings with roofs of thatch and slate and tile are full of the mystery-spirit the farm child knows so well. True a sinking roof under soggy straw is not common with us yet the same destroyers, time and weather, are at work in our bulging, moss covered shingles and rotting beams. The elemental force is the same. The horses near the stable door awaken the imp that made us steal the ride long ago. And how stupid those chickens with their interminable scratching.

Vollon's masterful brush work and fine sense of colour place him among the leading men in French art. He was born in Lyons and studied in the Academy of his native city before going to Paris to study under Ribot (see page 206).

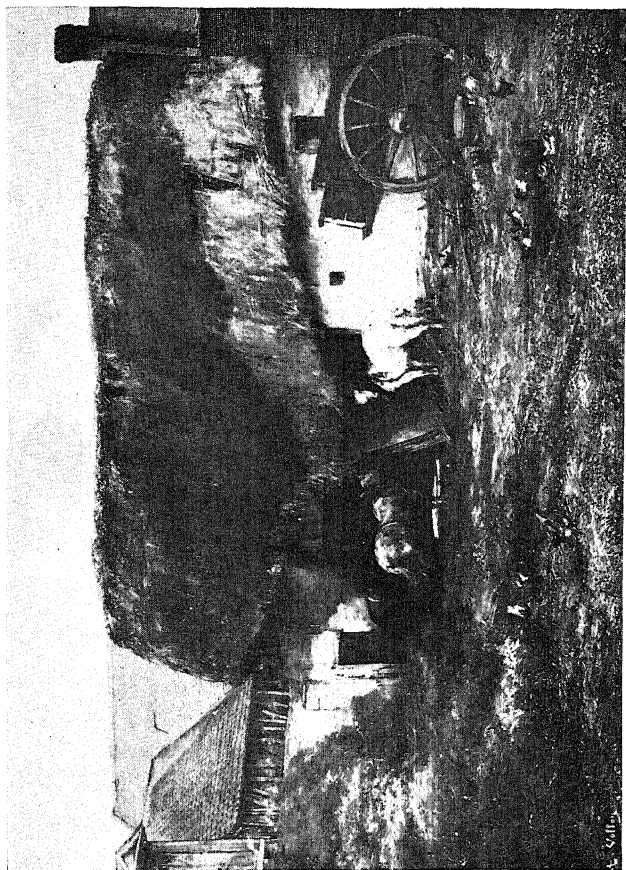


FIG. 148.—A Farm Yard. Volland, Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York City.

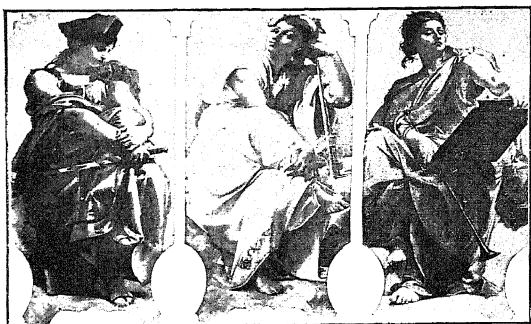


FIG. 149.—Single Figures. Baudry. Opera House. Paris.

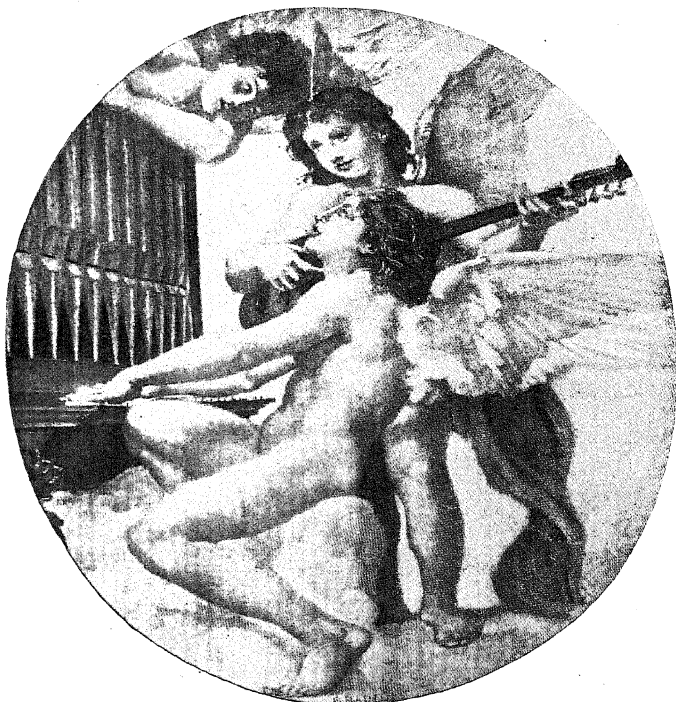


FIG. 150.—Germany in Music. Baudry. Opera House, Paris.

CHAPTER XXI

BAUDRY—BONNAT—C. DURAN—
LAURENS—REGNAULT—
B.—CONSTANT

NO artist had had a more thorough training in the principles of mural painting than Paul Jacques Amie Baudry (1828-1886) and none ever was more hampered than he by ponderous architectual fittings in his principal work—decorating the public foyer, Paris Opera House. Baudry began his art career one might say communing with the masters, Michael Angelo and Raphael. He studied their methods and copied their works. And the closer he came to them the more he himself grew in originality. One writer who knew the decorations, says, "No one who saw them in the Ecole des Beaux Arts before they were put in place, or who today will study the cartoons or photographs from them, but must acknowledge that they are great works for all time."

"The Muses," (detail, Fig. 149), show how well he profited by his study of the master. It is

said that after receiving the commission for the frieze Baudry copied the prophets in the Sistine Chapel, Rome, and went to Hampton Court, London, to copy Raphael's cartoons. Then came the war of 1870 with Germany and he shouldered a gun in defence of his country. It was a year later, when forty-three, that he began his work. For three years he lived in the Opera House where he seemed to become a part of the very building itself.

Now let us study those dun coloured figures dim as they are in the marvellous public lobby. We feel that the spirit of the master hovers near. Even Garnier, the architect, though he compels attention in size and ornate mouldings and finishings, does not awaken that sense of the imperishable as does Baudry in his suggestions—not copies—of past greatness. The subject of the original commission was "Music of the Various Nations" and Baudry added to this at his own expense eight panels of the muses.

The panel representing "Germany in Music," Opera House, Paris (Fig. 150), has a peculiar significance in revealing the bigness of the artist himself. Baudry no doubt knew the fact that "In 1870 Bismarck, when he wished to make war on France, forged a telegram in order to push France into the position of being the apparent

aggressor" (Dr. Hugh Black). Yet the artist was willing to recognize the musical genius of universal fame coming from the sinning country and to place that recognition in the most famous opera house in the world. The panel is especially attractive in design. In the centre of the panel the youth, straight and sturdy, marks the staying qualities that hold the bellying draperies and intensifies the fantastic rippling of loosened curls and dancing sunbeams. It is this rectitude of the great German composers coupled with fairy fancies that is holding music lovers and will hold them for all time.

Baudry was born in Roche-sur-Von, in the province of Vendée bordering the Atlantic Ocean. He was the third one of twelve children. He studied in the French Academy but his real teachers were Michael Angelo and Raphael until he came from the Opera House a new man with a message of his own to humanity. He went to Egypt and Greece returning to Paris "the most famous and the poorest of the artists of France." His fame brought him a commission to decorate the Pantheon with a series of Joan of Arc stories but the pay was too meagre. He painted many portraits and easel pictures; among the latter "The Wave and the Pearl," Kenyon Cox says "Perhaps the most perfect painting of the nude

done in modern time." As a man Baudry was much like Raphael—amiable, friendly and devoted to his art.

No two artists could have been more unlike in style and temperament than Gérôme (see page 104) and Leon Joseph Florentine Bonnat (1833). They were personal friends and Mr. Blashfield, who studied with them both, says that they each told him of the other, "There is no better master in Europe." That Bonnat's art-realism often went to extremes no one will deny yet his wrinkles and freckles are never the *raison d'être* of the portrait as in Denner. One cannot examine the "Portrait of John Taylor Johnson," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 151), without realizing that he has painted a man worthy to be the initial president of a growing art museum in the city of New York. We not only have the physical appearance of a strong personality but the actual mental calibre. To paint a masterful portrait certainly requires the skill of a master-painter.

It is Bonnat's "Portrait of Léon Cogniet," Luxembourg (Fig. 152), that grips us. Probably we have never heard of Cogniet, the French artist, but Bonnat compels us to take note of him just as he is compelling Bonnat to do his best. The intimate personal quality of the portrait is

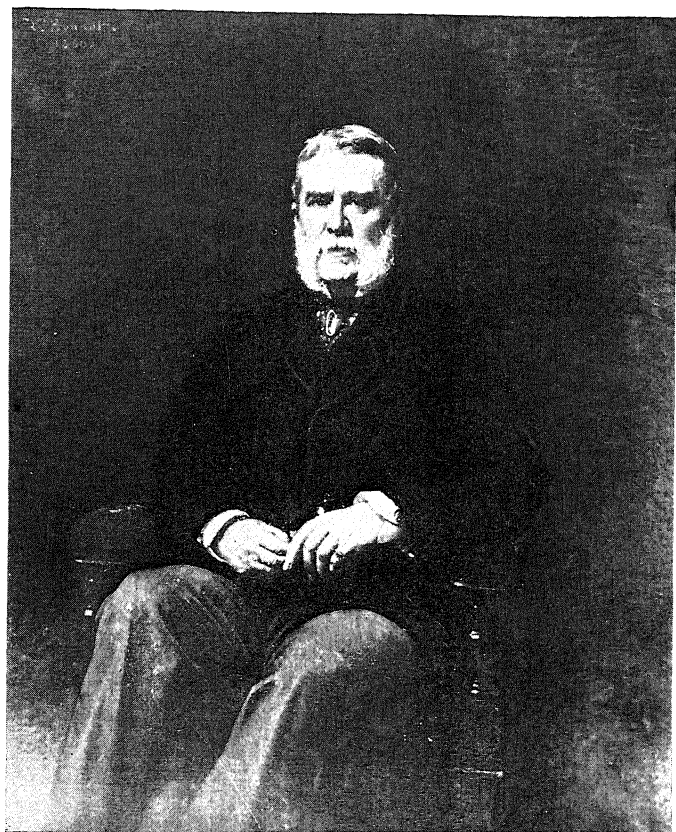


FIG. 151.—Portrait of John Taylor Johnson. Bonnat. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

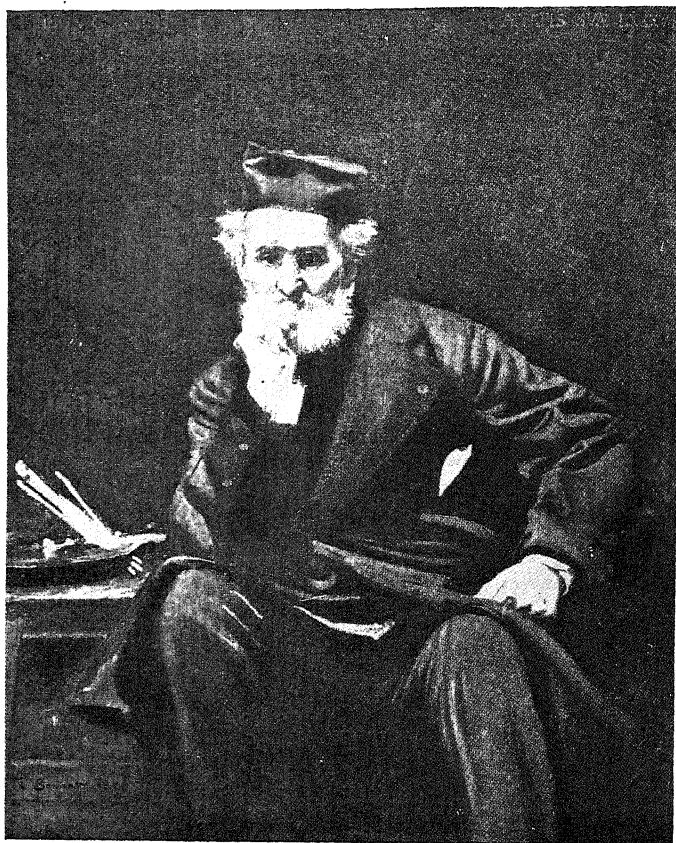


FIG. 152.—Portrait of Léon Cogniet. Bonnat. Luxembourg, Paris.

no doubt due to the close friendship of the two as master and pupil. The expectant quality of love and trust in those critical eyes has touched the very main spring of Bonnat's genius as a portrait painter and the likeness assumes to us the warmth of a personal friend. Léon Cogniet (1794-1880) was born in Paris and for many years was a leading art teacher and critical writer on Italian artists.

Mr. Blashfield repeats the following conversation that occurred between M. Maspero, the Egyptologist, and M. Bonnat, the artist, apropos to what Bonnat taught. They were at a dinner. Bonnat turned to his companion and said,

"Maspero, you who are near sighted, tell me how does M—— away down there at the foot of the table appear to you?"

"Well," replied Maspero, "I see a white spot which I know is his shirt front, and a flesh coloured spot which I know is his face."

"Ah," cried Bonnat, "how I wish my pupils could see things that way."

Bonnat was born at Bayonne on the sea board, the extreme southwest of France. His parents moved to Madrid where Bonnat came under the influence of the works of Velasquez and Murillo. At twenty-one he studied in Paris and then went to Italy and travelled extensively in the Orient.

He was director of the French Academy in Rome. He painted portraits of many famous men—Victor Hugo, M. Thiers, Renan.

Charles Auguste Emile Carolus-Duran (1837-1917, was born in the historic city of Lille, on the north border of France. He must have inherited some of the sturdy qualities of the old town. His method of work from the beginning of his art career was independent to the degree that, startling as he was, he became one of the most popular teachers in France. He reminds us in his fearlessness in inaugurating his own art rules of the famous barber of Lille during the Austrian siege of 1792, "Who when the bomb burst beside him snatched up a shred of it, introduced soap and lather into it, crying, 'Voilà mon plat à barbe!' my new shaving dish! and shaved fourteen people on the spot." Ever after the "Plat à barbe," was the popular shaving dish and "No patriot of an elegant turn but shaves himself out of the splinter of a Lille bomb."

The first thing Carolus-Duran did in Paris when fifteen years old was to copy again and again da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," in the Louvre. This daring procedure doubtless provoked criticism—a slip of a boy, how absurd! and then at twenty-three he went to Rome and lived six months with the monks at Subiaco, a town thirty-



FIG. 153.—Beppino. Carolus-Duran.

three miles east of Rome, where the remains of Nero's villa and a castle in ruins of the eleventh century were ample food for his genius.

As a portrait painter Carolus-Duran justly ranks among the best of his time. His people live. There is no mistake about "Beppino" (Fig. 153) being a power in the household. She is the reigning queen and everything revolves around her. Of course they are willing subjects for Beppino would win anybody with those eyes whether or no she will win out by the tyranny of babyhood. John Singer Sargent was one of Carolus-Duran's famous pupils. To feel the master's influence just look at Sargent's portrait of "The Boit Children," in Boston (*American Pictures and their Painters*, page 158). You will note that the decorative quality of both pictures is due to personality in the human element. Each child suggests traits that have come from generations of ancestors. One could say of these pictures of children to know them one must go back to their grandparents.

One of the finest portraits by Carolus-Duran is that of his wife called, "La Dame au gaut," Luxembourg, where he has shown a fine perception of the little personal traits that endear individuals to us. Often he had watched his wife pulling off her gloves one finger at a time

as she related some interesting incident and now he has fixed the action that in his memory is one of her dainty characteristics. Of course we realize that it is not picture quality that Carolus-Duran is seeking but a portrait-likeness and in that he pleased the public and consequently was one of the most popular portrait painters of the day.

The most important scene in the life of St. Genevieve to be portrayed on the walls of the Pantheon, Paris—her death-bed blessing to the world—was given to Jean Paul Laurens (1838–1921). Laurens in preparation for this great work painted three other death scenes, “The Death of the Duke d’Enghein,” at the Museum of Alençon, and “Francis Borgia before the Dead Isabella of Portugal,” and “The Austrian Staff-Officers around the Death-bed of Morceau.” The latter was bought by the city of Ghent for about eight thousand dollars. Naturally no theme in the history of France is dearer to the people than that of the life of St. Genevieve (see page 195) and Laurens has summed up the effect of her death on high and low, rich and poor as no one else could have done.

The scene of “The Death of Saint Genevieve,” in the Pantheon (Fig. 154), is painted on the

wall as a permanent part of the building itself. No building in Paris is a more fitting memorial to this saint of the French nation than the Pantheon. The scene may not be the most pleasing one in the life of St. Genevieve yet Laurens' sincerity of purpose and deep feeling are so marked that no one can turn away from it without realizing the strength of the composition. He not only establishes the historic value of the saint but gives a sense of reality to the assembled mourners that makes them a part of the present day events.

Laurens' portrayal of lugubrious historic subjects was remarkably restrained. The exhibitions of the times—in the seventies—were full of portraits, landscapes and genre pictures and to fight the growing indifference to historic subjects took the kind of courage Laurens possessed. His firm drawing, splendid composition and determined energy in execution were never more telling than in the large canvas he sent to the Salon of 1872 of a savage scene between the dead Pope Formosus and the living Pope Stephens VII (about 896). The painting was pronounced by contemporary critics the best in the Salon.

Laurens was born in Toulouse, "That blessed

town," said the artist Constant, "which produces so many artists that one would think it had a monopoly in this direction."

War is a tragedy, especially is this true when it cuts off one who is enriching mankind. The untimely death of Henri Regnault (1843-1871) has made all mankind the poorer. He was killed with "possibly the last bullet fired in the Franco-Prussian war," in a skirmish at Buzenval. Young as Regnault was in the few short years of his art career he startled the world with the realism, the vigour and the vitality of his work. At twenty-three he won the Prix de Rome. One of the first paintings of his stay in the Eternal City was "Automedon Taming the Horses of Achilles," in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Fig. 155). At once we are struck by the intense passion of action, a climax as it were of the Romanticism of Gericault and Delacroix, where action is held by a stern sense of form that curbed any liberties against fundamental laws.

Never were those splendid steeds, Xanthos and Belios, portrayed more in accord with Homer's description (see Book XIX, *Iliad*). The pale glimmer below the storm-swept sky sheds a sinister light over the calm sea and barren shore that seems to portend disaster—the death of their beloved master, Achilles.

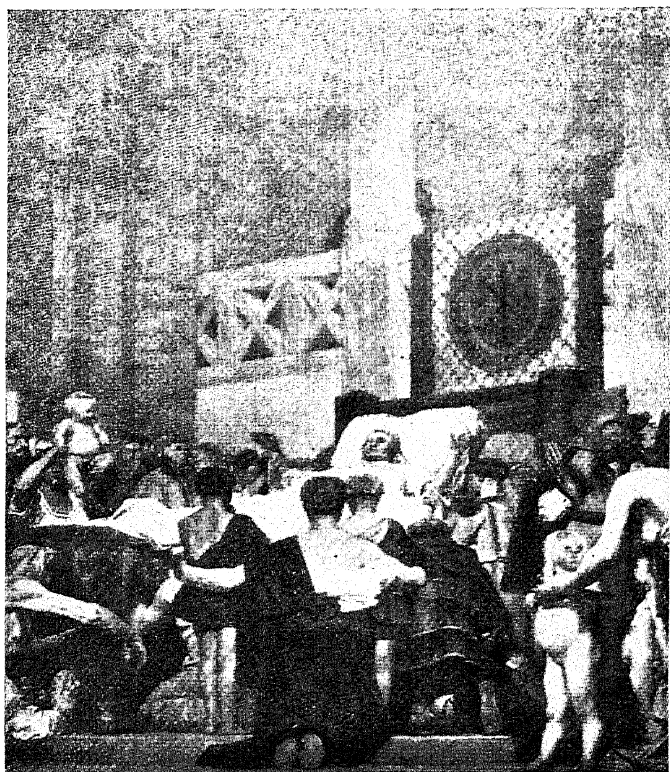


FIG. 154.—Death of Saint Genevieve. Laurens. Pantheon, Rome.



FIG. 155.—Horses of Achilles. Regnault. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass.

From Rome Regnault went to Spain and there painted the famous "Portrait of General Prim," now in the Luxembourg, and a year later in 1870 he sent "Salome," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 156), to the Salon. This might justly come under one of Whistler's studies in colour. Various tones of yellow predominate and form a startling contrast to the purple-black hair. This Salome is a barbarian, an unmoral being gloating with innocent pride over the uncanny deed. Look into those eyes and study the caressing fingers handling the glittering blade, The picture is a sunburst of golden radiance.

At times Regnault's realism was terrific. When his "Execution without Judgment," in the Louvre, was first exhibited it created a profound sensation with both critics and public. Persons grew faint and dizzy as they stood before the picture so horrible was the scene yet the simplicity and strength of its execution held one fascinated. The principal actors are two figures, the executioner and the victim, on a marble stairway bathed in a glowing light. One stands tall and erect, immovable as a statue as he wipes the blood from his scimeter on his tunic; the other a mangled trunk has fallen down the steps, his head caught in a pool of blood. A contemporary critic writing of the painting, says, "It is not too much

to say that this blood mantling on the marble slab is one of the finest bits of colour in modern art."

Jean Joseph Benjamin-Constant (1845-1902) lived at Montmaitre, a section of Paris that is said to represent the brains, the wit and the genius of France, as also its blarney. However Benjamin-Constant never let the decadence of art, that was eating the heart out of many an artist in Montmaitre affect his work; he was far too indefatigable a worker to be influenced even by affluence—his by birthright. Not alone as a painter but as a writer he constantly held the public conscience up to high standards. A few of his epigrams will epitomize his character and his power better than anything we can say of him. He wrote, "The talent of the real masters is never discouraged." Again, "Good faith is the health of the soul." And again, "A master often does unskilfully a thing that is true, and a pupil skilfully a thing that is false." And again, "Where the thought of man ends God begins."

Benjamin-Constant's use of colour was the marvel of his time. He would lay it on direct from the tube with the abandon of a dilettante while creating a masterpiece. His love of the Orient gave to each subject of the Orient a per-



FIG. 156.—Salome. Regnault. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

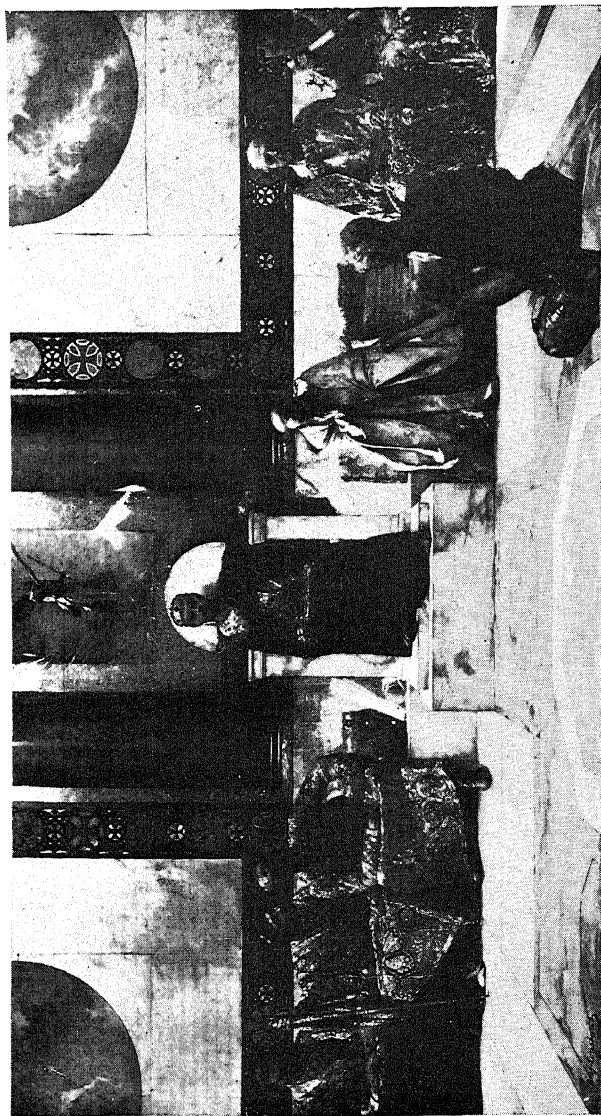


FIG. 157.—Justinian in Council. Benjamin-Constant. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

sonal twist that was Benjamin-Constant. In "Thirst, Prisoners of Morocco," he shows a white waste of sand under the African sun with a tiny rivulet and three half naked prisoners flat on the ground in their eagerness to obtain the water while the Arab captor sits his horse perfectly impassive to them. A third Arab keeps watch in the background. Constant with wonderful simplicity has infused into the scene the governing principle that divides the East from the West—the principle of master and mastered. Very vividly that vast waste extinguishes every ray of hope in the captured and intensifies the indifference of the captor. The artist arouses a deeper interest in the whole subject of the East.

This is specially true in his picture of "Justinian in Council," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 157). Ancient Byzantium is now Constantinople. The Emperor Justinian (482?-565) is head of the Christian church. The fierce discussion of dogma—a fight between the believers in the dual nature of Christ (the greens) and the single nature where the human and the divine are one in Christ (the blues)—had been raging in the reign of his uncle, Emperor Justin, and was still continuing in riots and blood-shed. Constant has portrayed in the painting the word picture given by the ancient Byzantine his-

torian, Procopius (490-565?). He said in part, "The aged Justinian, seated in a room in his vast palace and busied late into the night with a meeting of grey-headed bishops in explaining according to his view the 'dogma of Christians.' " We can understand that such a ruler could quiet useless controversy. Then too Justinian had a wonderful wife as a help-mate—the empress Theodora. She had been an actress in the famous Hippodrome and thoroughly understood the temper of the frequenters of the circus. Her influence was great in helping to quell the uprisings. Constant must have been influenced in his colour scheme by the gorgeous mosaics of Justinian and Theodora that were made as early as the sixth century.

CHAPTER XXII

MANET—DEGAS—MONET—SISLEY RENOIR

EDOUARD MANET'S (1833-1883) announcement that "The principal person in the picture is light!" struck blind both artists and lay public. The brilliancy of his teachings, his works and his social amenities all used to promulgate his theory that nature should be painted as she "impresses" not as she really is caused a storm of criticism of unprecedented bitterness. For twenty years Manet fought against the "dead and alive" condition of the Academy and Salon. He held that art meant treating all nature through the medium of light, of air, of vibrating colour notes. His pictures were not only refused again and again at the exhibitions but scoffed at and scorned, laughed at and held up to ridicule. The younger men felt the truth of his work though they lacked the courage to fight with him, yet they entered into his labour when the battle was won.

It is true that not many of Manet's paintings

were pleasing as pictures but they were beautiful because they were wonderfully done. One critic says, "His hand was dowered with the gift of quality, and there his art began and ended—I remember a pear that used to hang in his studio, Hals would have taken off his hat to it—" Manet once said to a friend, "I also tried to write, but I did not succeed; I never could do anything but paint."

"The Boy with a Sword," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 158), is, however, an exception in its attractive qualities as a picture. That boy, so quaint in his childish efforts to hold the big sword firmly, looks us in the eyes with the unafraid frankness of a child. Standing alone in the centre of space—a space felt on all sides—he represents the very acme of sincerity. Vibrant colour sets every feature of the face quivering and glints the unmodelled eyes with the light of life. What a comment this "Boy with a Sword," must have been to the overweening vanity of the would-be artists who were tickling the public taste with sugar plum art. And yet Manet was ignored though he was bringing the world back to seeing nature.

And again take "The Beggar," The Art Institute, Chicago (Fig. 159). It is very strange that artists were so blind a half century ago that



FIG. 158.—The Boy with a Sword. Manet. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

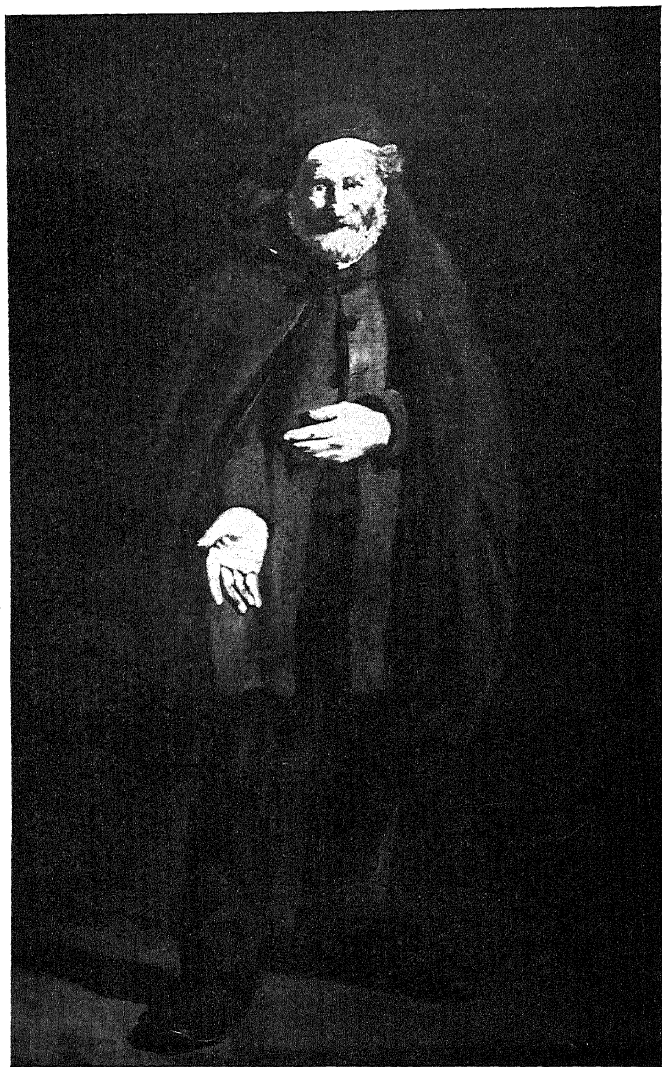


FIG. 159.—The Beggar. Manet. Courtesy of The Art Institute, Chicago, Illinois.

they could not recognize the greatness of the man who could paint such a picture. Even if much of Manet's work was experimental these pictures would justify his protests against false traditions just because they were traditions. We cannot linger long before this beggar or a coin must be put in his outstretched hand. Surely Rembrandt would have recognized in that hand a little of the power he himself put in the hand of the "Man with a Steel Gorget," Metropolitan Museum of Art.

"The Guitarist," Metropolitan Museum of Art, is a striking picture. I say "striking" yet the scene is common enough wherever Spanish people come together. Many artists have seen its picture value before Manet painted this one—I doubt if he thought of it at all in terms of picture value—and behold, a guitarist who remains a personality! Other pictures are forgotten though they may have been more pleasing when first seen. The accessories in the picture are almost nil, the colour rather harsh and the fellow is no Apollo but the picture is compelling.

Today modern art is bigger because of Manet. All artists recognize the great debt they owe to his fight for individual expression in painting—however, to Manet individual liberty never meant license in his heart or his life. Unfortunately he

did not live to bring to full fruition in complete pictures the principles he inaugurated and that are the cornerstone of good art.

Hilaire Germain Edgar Degas (1834-1917) stands quite alone in his art. If there was any one thing that seemed to possess his very soul it was the sense of motion and next was the ability to transfer that motion to canvas. Yet it is far more than motion, it is the ability to move; it is life. Do we want to know intimately the French dance girl look at this portrayal of her on the stage, above the footlights, beneath the spot light, behind the stage repairing a rent, sewing on a button, tying a shoe lace, always revealing the girl as a human element. Many times the subject of the picture is not pleasing to us simply because the particular act portrayed offends our sensitive selves but the picture is big with the simplicity of truth.

Degas was trained under Ingres (see page 77) who taught that, "In nature all is form." Later under the influence of Manet he saw that light transformed from and changed the painted figures into vitalized human beings. This training and his intuitive understanding of the undertones of growing life sensitized by his knowledge of the art of Japan gave him an unprecedented power in interpreting the ugly and the unlovely



FIG. 160.—La Danseuse. Degas. Luxembourg, Paris.



FIG. 161.—La Danseuse. Degas. Luxembourg, Paris.

that he saw among the people—his people, for he lived a strange life apart from his fellow workers and from the world in general. He cared nothing for applause, in fact shunned every avenue that possibly could bring him to the notice of the public yet, says George Moore, a few years later, "Degas now occupies the most enviable position an artist can attain—if the highest honour is to obtain the admiration of your fellow-workers. That honour has been bestowed on Degas"

"La Danseuse," in the Luxembourg, Paris (Fig. 160), as she stoops to nurse her ankle with one hand and rests her compact body on her knee with the other is a curious mixture of the trained performer and the mere human being feeling pain.

Very different is "La Danseuse," Luxembourg (Fig. 161), before the footlights. Balancing on one toe she whirls and circles as light as a butterfly on the wing. A very real part of the picture is the crowded house she holds with her gesture and smile. No wonder Degas could criticize a fellow artist's crowded canvas with the remark, "A crowd is made with five persons not with fifty." He pictures a crowd without a person. No painter but Degas has ever aroused the public to feel the wear and tear on the entertainer and

the little appreciation given to the spent human spirits behind the footlights.

A unique and exceedingly interesting Degas is *Mdlle. Fiori in the Ballet of La Source*," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 162). The colour is of that marvellous quality that one feels but no words can describe. The luscious sorrel of the horse, the auburn hair and dull golden-red dress of the young woman form a harmony of exquisite tones. *Mdlle. Fiori's* dress of silver-tinted blue twinkles and sparkles as joyous as the surrounding light and air. The composition is unusual for a picture though a most natural scene in reality.

It is said that when Claude Monet (1840), who was eight years younger than Manet, exhibited the first time at the Salon he signed his picture with his surname only. It happened to be the year that Manet's "*Olympia*" was causing commotion and now a second tradition-breaker, Monet, had the temerity to exhibit too. Manet saw the signature and perhaps thinking the artist was plagiarizing his work, asked, angrily, "Who is this Monet who has the air of taking my name and who is coming thus to profit by the noise which I have made?" After this Monet was careful to sign his name Claude Monet; later the two artists became firm friends.

It has been stated again and again that the



FIG. 162.—La Source. Degas. Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

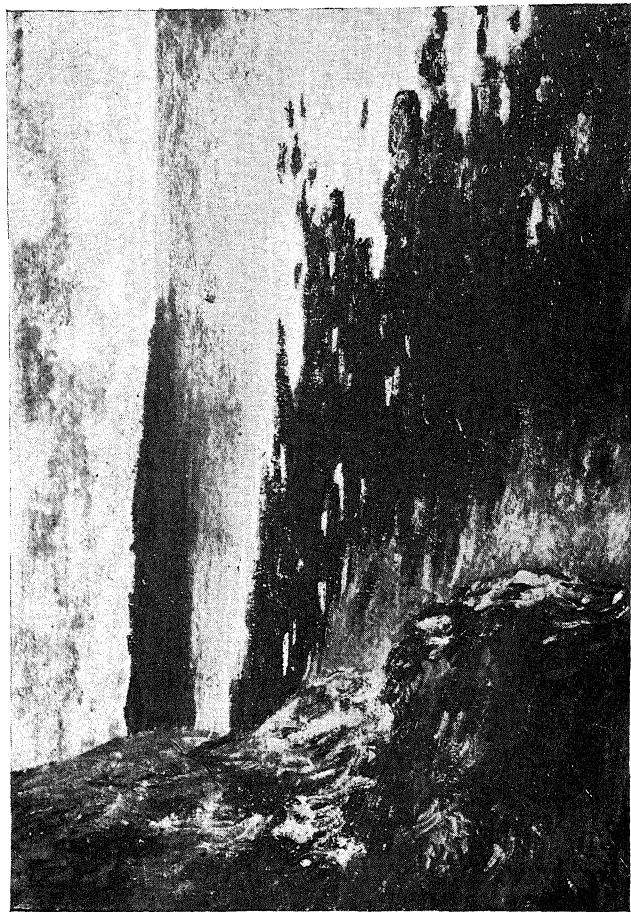


FIG. 163.—The Coast of Brittany. Monet. Courtesy of the Knoedler Gallery, New York City.

name "Impressionist," is a misnomer in describing the movement set on foot by Manet in genre (in its broadest sense) figures, and Monet in landscape. John C. Van Dyke says, "That these painters who are seeking effects of light and air . . . should be called luminists if it is necessary for them to be named at all." Monet insisted that nature's shadows are luminous. He then proceeded to put side by side pure pigments, yellow, pale red and pale blue which gave the effect of light without using white at all. He simply went back to his physics and applied the rules in optics. He kept a number of canvases going at once to catch the varied effects of light and atmosphere under the change of time and temperature. Of course his laying on of paint in ridges was an unheard of procedure and at once aroused adverse judgment against such liberties in methods of painting. Soon the more observant began to realize that a certain vital force seemed to spread over Monet's landscapes which gave to them the effect of a real scene. There are the quivering atmosphere, elusive tones of colour, the luminous light and shades of nature herself.

Monet did not reach this perfection at once but through a long experimental stage and then we have such a scene as "The Coast of Brittany,"

The M. Knoedler Gallery (Fig. 163). No longer are pigments piled in parallel rows as though juggling with paints were the main purpose for the picture existence. Experiment has given place to a perfect understanding of the material used and the real Monet has emerged as a recognized power by the public. I wish you would look at the coast scene again. I have been to the gallery many times just to feel the joy of the projecting rock, the exhausted water, the invigorating ocean air and the alluring expanse of sky and water. Monet has caught the spiritual essence of nature—that something that brings God close to us.

At first Monet received very little appreciation; in fact at the sale of Daubigny's effects a Monet picture was put out of sight for fear its presence might injure the sale of the older master's works. Later that same picture went from eighty francs to fifty-five hundred francs then to thirty thousand francs and today could scarcely be bought with money.

This element of investigation, this Manet-Monet upheaval which set the Academy on edge and stirred the art world to the very depth, gave a new impetus to art and no artist could be quite the same, whether he agreed or disagreed, as before the insurgents opened his eyes to the new

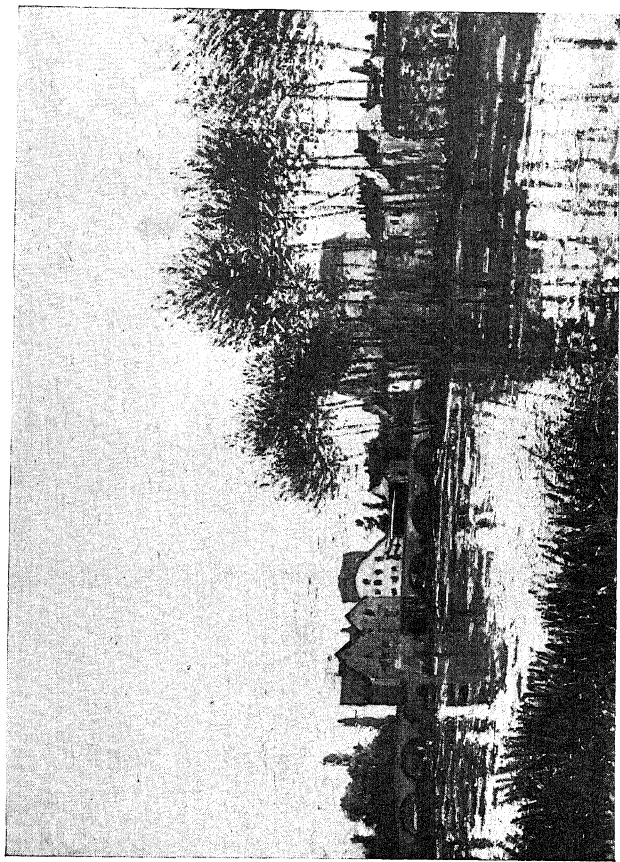


Fig. 164.—“Moret au Couchant du Solier, Octobre.” Sisler.
Gallery, New York City. Courtesy of the Knoedler

uses of light and air and colour. Naturally the followers of the new movement, mostly the younger men, modified or exaggerated according to individual temperament and many of their art products mark a strange epoch in the art world. The encouraging feature is that

Men may come and men may go,
But art goes on forever,

and no upheaval in methods, however radical, crushes the true artist—the creative, the constructive, the individual who works on indestructible principles laid down from the beginning of time. Such artists, ever learning always building, are the balancing power that steadies progress.

One of the very individual exponents of Monet was Alfred Sisley (1840-1899). Born in Paris of English parents Sisley was so essentially French in his whole manner of life and work that he used to say he felt he was in a foreign country when in England. The pathos of his life from a financial standpoint would wring tears from a heart of stone. If it had not been for the big heart of Murer, a restaurant keeper, who loved literature and art and only fed people to live, Sisley, Renoir and other impressionists would have starved to death. On certain days

the restaurant gave free meals to these not only unrecognized but scorned and ridiculed artists. Not three months after Sisley's death his pictures sold like wild fire for fabulous sums. What fools we mortals are! Genius starves in our midst and the ignorant ride in gold trappings!

Monet and Sisley, born in the same year, seemed to stand apart from the other men of the new movement. Sisley really the last of the school never had any recognition until death claimed him. The monument to him at Moret—a village at the juncture of the Seine and the Marne, a few miles southeast of Fontainebleau—stands near the bridge he so often shows in his pictures. Possibly in no picture has that bridge become so intimate as in "Moret au coucher du Solier, Octobre," in M. Knoedler Gallery (Fig. 164). The sun has disappeared but the mottled sky gleams with wondrous colour—a combination of tones each struggling to break through the piles of fluffy clouds chasing each other. No trees ever posed against a more glorious background. And the bridge. Is it any wonder the town's folk chose a spot near it to place the statue of Sisley? He not only guards it but vitalizes it.

We sometimes wonder what it was that held together these French seekers for the effect of light and air. Separately they stood for in-



FIG. 165.—Portrait of Madame Carpentier and Children. Renoir. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

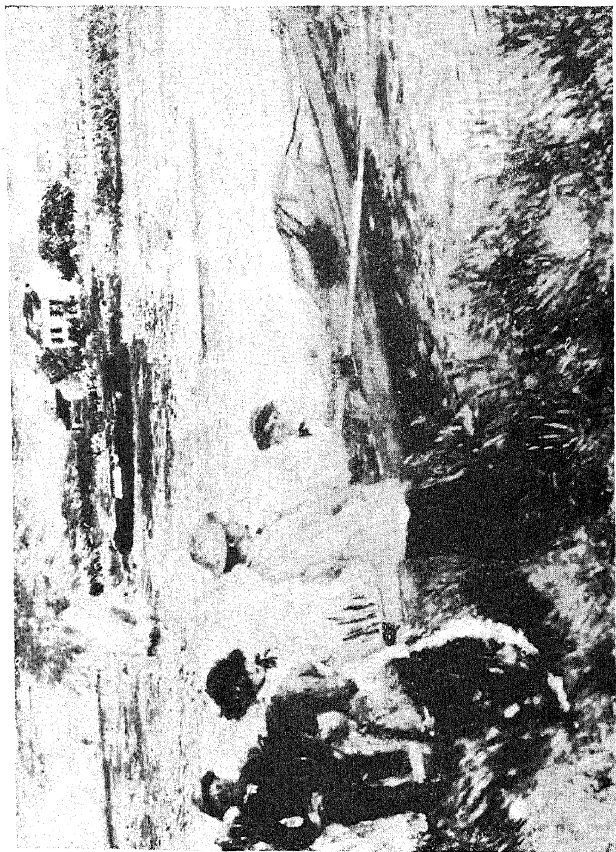


Fig. 166.—Canotiers à Chaton. Renoir. Courtesy of the Knoedler Gallery, New York City.

dividuality itself; collectively they advised, suggested, shared discoveries—as well as bread—and were altogether helpful to each other. And what was it that stirred them to action synchronously? As most of them were born thirty years before Germany decided again to own France perhaps the indignant protest against brute force ruling mankind sensitized their spiritual nature until bigger visions of the real power of France—her art—obsessed her.

While landscape appealed more directly to Monet and Sisley, Pierre August Renoir (1841-1920) found his inspiration largely in figure pieces. He was nearly as poor in worldly goods and just as determined in spirit as his bosom friend, Monet. Many were the meals they ate together, thanks to the kindness of Murer, then with renewed strength, but no recognition, continued their research work.

The "Portrait of Madame Carpentier and her Children," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 165), wife of M. Carpentier a well known French publisher, was the turning point in the material life of Renoir. From great poverty he stepped into wealth from his pictures. Not that his work was better now but influence exploited it and fortunately the patron knew real worth. True many points in the picture offend today as the

much decorated table, the over crowded room and many coloured stuffs but the satisfaction of enjoying real, live people full of human interest places the picture among our valuable treasures.

Renoir was born in Limoges, in southeast France, in that city rich in the enamel-work it produced which may have first fired the young artist with his love of colour. One writer says, "Limoges paints with fire in liquid glass—and turns out veritable gems of colour and composition." Renoir spent most of his time in the south of France and died in Cannes on Côte d'Azur, the Blue Shore, as the French half of the Riviera is called.

A most delightful example of Renoir's out door scenes is "Canotiers à Chaton," M. Knoedler Gallery (Fig. 166). This is impressionism in its perfection. Light and reflection are coming and going with the shifting clouds,—they dance and quiver as things alive; they laugh and sing in the gaily painted boat (red) and in the lovely rhythm of water, grass and colonial home across the river. Yes, the critic is right when he says, "Light volatilizes design." Renoir has perfectly poetized light and air into a lyric that expresses the feeling of joy and contentment.

CHAPTER XXIII

GUILLAUMET—VIBERT—ROYBET—
MORISOT—DE NEUVILLE—
MOROT—DETAILLE

THE decade of 1840 was a fruitful one for baby-boy and girl artists. And the curious part is that these embryo painters became definite personalities in art, and from entirely different angles. There was Gustave Achille Guillaumet (1840-1887) who in spite of his training in Picot's atelier and the Ecole des Beaux Arts, developed a perfectly distinct treatment of the Oriental spirit. Many men had been painting the desert in the near East, wonderful pictures too, but Guillaumet alone gives the thrill that comes from experiencing the scene oneself. He has achieved the same aliveness in atmosphere and light and in colour that characterizes Monet and Sisley's works though he had nothing else in common with their art.

In realistic treatment he had simply grown away from Decamps and Fromentin and painted what he saw. No one could stand before "The Desert at Sunset," Pennsylvania Museum, Phil-

adelphia (Fig. 167), without feeling the pull of some mysterious power dwelling in the sea of shifting sand. The huddled group of animals and attendants is but a speck in the wide expanse yet somehow the tall spare figure at the right has grasped the source from whence the power comes. The strength and dignity of that man is that of a god dominating the forces of nature because his right is to have the dominion of the earth. Unlike Balzac Guillaumet makes man a vital part of the desert. The artist lived in Algeria where he followed the daily life of the Arab. He went with him into the desert and saw the sun rise and the sun set. He watched the glare of the noon day and felt the vibrant atmosphere under the rapidly changing temperature. He saw with seeing eyes and a sensitive understanding. His pictures are radiant with light and colour and atmosphere.

One scarcely knows where to place Jehan Georges Vibert (1840-1902) except that his technique is about perfect and his colour brilliancy itself. If these two and painstaking detail work constitute an artist then Vibert would qualify otherwise he falls far below the men who saw below the surface. After seeing one of Vibert's cardinals in a red robe one ever thinks of the

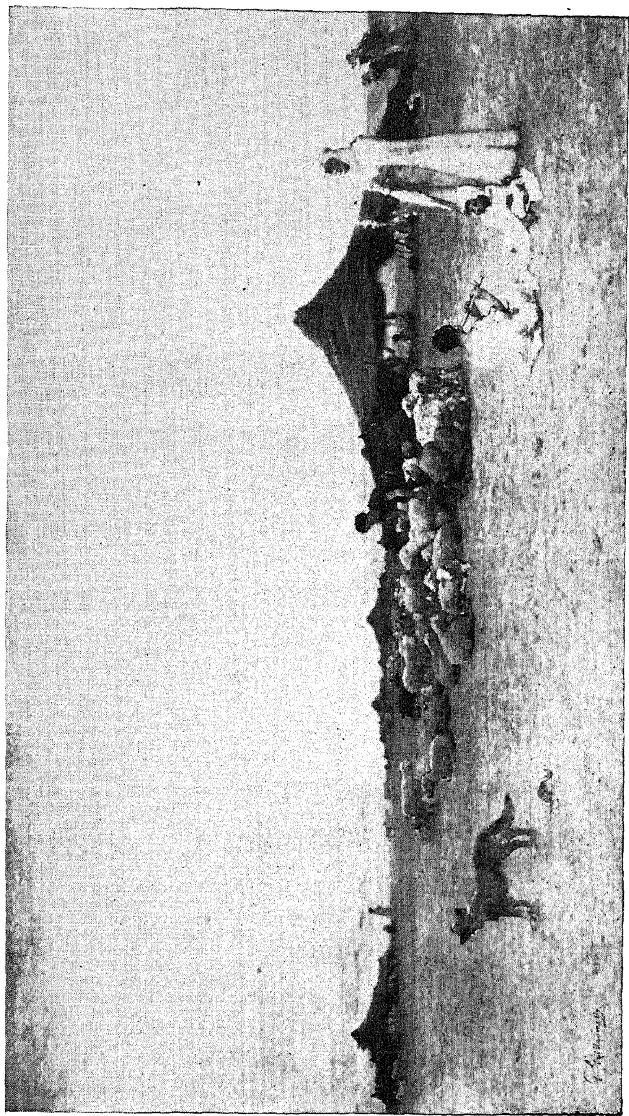


FIG. 167.—The Desert at Sunset. Guillaumet. Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia, Pa.

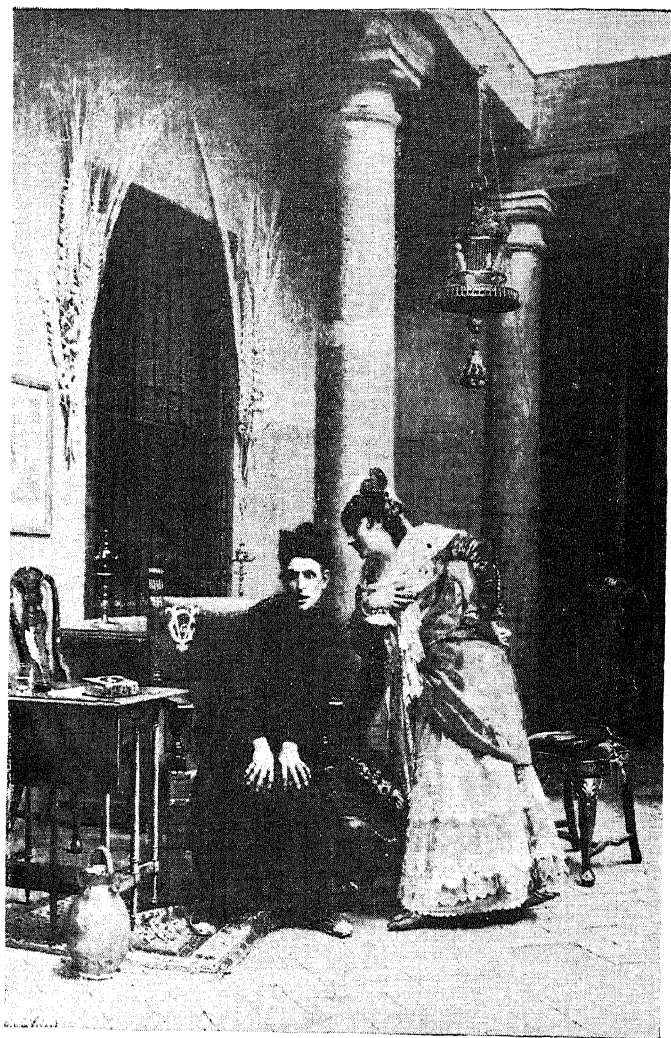


FIG. 168.—The Startled Confessor. Vibert. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

artist in terms of cardinal-red. Red may be one of the special colour variations that he contributed to the painter's palette through his chemical research work—at least Vibert's red is peculiar to him.

He certainly understood the human frailties of the church clergy and his exceedingly clever and humorous portrayal of them has no taint of pessimism to cause offence. In the "Startled Confessor," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 168), it is easy to detect the effect the beautiful woman produces on the priest. No doubt her aim was to captivate the attractive young father confessor and her story is simply the pretext for using her charms. The brilliant red note in the young woman's dress and the flower in her dark hair; the white Spanish lace trimming and the priest's black habit serve to intensify the scene and emphasize the story. Vibert delighted in using pure pigments even to the extent of outdoing nature.

Ferdinand Roybet (1840), although born the same year with Vibert, was his pupil. His innate love of colour was no doubt intensified by Vibert but his choice of rich stuffs in costuming his people is decidedly his own. He came to Paris when young and almost at once his

exhibitions began to attract the Parisian art lovers until in 1890 his "one man" display caused an unprecedented show of enthusiasm.

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Game of Cards" (Fig. 169), is a good example of Roybet's brilliant rendering of a seventeenth century pastime. No one could mistake the spirit of the Empire. The brilliant hangings, decorated furnishings and ornamental costumes are just the details to animate the scene with the life of the time. Roybet was born in the ancient town of Uzès about twenty-five miles from the sea. Uzès is on the direct line to Paris, Lyons and the Mediterranean Railroad.

A French critic wrote, after the death of Berthe Morisot (1841-1895), "There has been no lack of women painters in the history of art; there has been a lack of woman painting, that is, a painting expressing the particular aspect things should present to a woman's eyes and a woman's spirit." It is, after all, when women keep their point of view in their work that gives them strength and Berthe Morisot proved this to be true. She was ever herself—a sane, steady self—painting what she saw the way she saw it. This was specially interesting because she was a pupil of Corot, and in 1874, she became the wife of the brother of Edouard Manet, and was

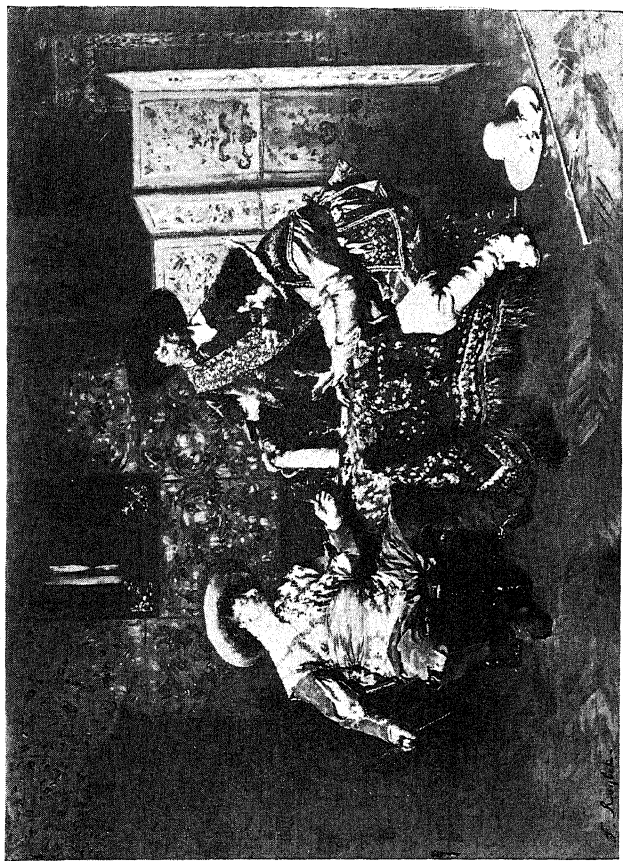


FIG. 169.—The Game of Cards. Roybet. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 170.—Jeune Fille. Morisot. Private Collection Moses Joseph Reinach.

great granddaughter of Fragonard (see page 44). She was big enough to see the significance of Manet's contentions without losing her own identity, though her works took on the new spirit of the impressionist. In "Jeune Fille," Collection of Joseph Reinach, Paris (Fig. 170), the girl is a substantial reality treated artistically. Her personality might be that of the artist herself. She is looking out on life with seeing eyes already questioning the whys and wherefores around her.

Berthe Morisot was born in Bruges, she studied in Lyons and then went to Paris where she died. She and Mary Cassatt, whom the French claim though we insist on the prior claim, were strong personalities in the changing methods of the last half century. They both stand in the forming line to claim the title of modern old masters that time and chastened opinion establishes.

Aimé Nicolas Morot (1850-1913) is an artist who has given a vivid account of that fateful fall of 1870. The main army of the French were shut up in Metz. The German army, far outnumbering them, was advancing rapidly. Marshall McMahon—afterward second president of the Republic—to retard the German advance and cover the French retreat, charged the enemy at "Reichsoffen," Versailles (Fig. 171). His

30,000 men against the 130,000 Germans were soon overcome yet the splendid courage of General McMahon and the terrific onslaught of his men gained the enthusiastic admiration of the enemy as well as of France. Morot has put into his painting the fire and audacity of the French character. He has made one feel that fighting against odds was of little consequence when fighting for the French home, even the horses partake of the spirit of their masters. The artist has given to the onrush a power like unto the sudden burst of wind clouds sweeping everything in its path.

Morot was born in Nancy, the city so noted for its university, academy and schools; for its great men and beautiful works of art. Morot was specially noted for his excellent portraits many of them of the prominent men of his day.

Alphonse Marie de Neuville (1836-1885) was probably the most accurate chronicler of the Franco-Prussian war of all the historians of that event. His scenes are actual occurrences. He took notes on the spot and some of his jottings are so true to life that the Germans often recognized some of their own men in his pictures. As de Neuville was on the staff he had ample opportunity to sketch each incident as it occurred.

De Neuville was a man of education and dis-



FIG. 171.—Reichsoffen. Morot. Versailles, France.

cretion and his training as an illustrator gave him a wonderful grasp of salient points and enabled him to compose rapidly a perfectly logical scene embodying the feverish haste of actuality. His portrayal of the terrible spirit of reckless valour that marked the individual French soldier in that unequal contest gives his pictures an unusual value.

"The Last Cartridges," (*Les dernières Cartouches à Bilan*), Luxembourg (Fig. 172), has that spirit of desperation that filled the heart of each soldier in the unequal contest. At the town of Bilan, a short distance from Sedan, northeast from Paris, was the most desperate fighting of 1870. The French, taking their stand in the old house, are fighting unmindful of wounds or odds against them. The one passion, to kill the enemy, has taken possession of their very souls. Even the disabled give no evidence of a cowed spirit. True it was a defeated army that Napoleon III surrendered on September 2, 1870 but the spirit of freedom was still burning in the French heart.

De Neuville was born in St. Omer, a few miles inland from Calais, of a rich and aristocratic family. His father intended he should follow the law but Alphonse became a painter instead much to the chagrin of the family and the detriment of his purse.

Edouard Detaille (1848-1912), a favourite pupil of Meissonier, was the younger man by thirty-three years. Although he followed his master in careful execution and character of subject he was too original to be a mere copyist. His own training in military life in the Franco-Prussian war gave him a deeper insight into the undertone of the deadly conflict than a mere battle-field scene would. His "Dream," Luxembourg (Fig. 173), is far more effective than an actual battle scene picture. That bloodless encounter faintly outlined against the moonlit sky is far more pathetic in its significance. Those thousands of bivouac soldiers stretching away into the limitless distance watched only by the gun stacks row upon row are far less sure of their tomorrow's fate than under the sword of Damocles. In the original painting, unfortunately the half tone does not show it, Detaille has elaborated details until each soldier in the foreground has become a personal element and "The Dream," pictured in the sky, an individual fancy of a troubled brain. Detaille's carefulness in detail is that of the famous general's report, "We are ready, quite ready; we miss not a gaiter button." It was not petty exactness but a soldier's sense of good discipline.



FIG. 172.—The Last Cartridges. De Neuville. Luxembourg, Paris.

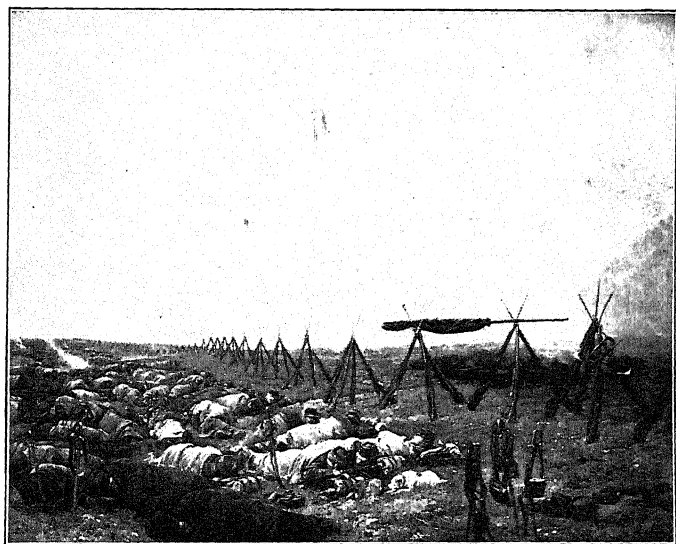


FIG. 173.—The Dream. Detaille. Luxembourg, Paris.

CHAPTER XXIV

DORÉ—DE MONVEL—TISSOT

THERE are three French illustrators whose names are household words in America—Doré, Tissot, and Boutet de Monvel. They belong to no special time or school, yet no history of French artists, however brief, is quite complete without mentioning them. Illustrating is not high art—although some great artists have been illustrators—and those who have the gift of seeing in pictures often lack the finer quality to perfect the talent given them. It is comparatively easy for a genius to sketch at breakneck speed the imaginings of a fertile brain, but to manipulate with a trained, painstaking mind requires thought. One with a natural talent must cultivate, if he would deliver at least the talent with usury. It was just there that Gustave Doré (1833-1883) failed. He was not willing to pay the price; it was too easy to dash off first impressions, though he himself was never satisfied. Being a child-prodigy is a terrible handicap. Gustave at twelve published lithographs, at sixteen was illustrat-

ing on a Paris newspaper and at twenty-one his illustrations of Rabelais made him famous. Book after book followed in quick succession—"The Wandering Jew," "Don Quixote," the "Bible," "Milton," "Dante," "La Fontaine," etc.

Doré's imaginings are marvellous. Sometimes his scenes reach the highest sublimity; more often, alas, they lack the coherent quality that careful study brings and many times the carelessness of haste is very apparent. His choice of masterpieces to illustrate was most fortunate. He caught the public, but unfortunately he did not measure up to his own ambitions and that public today feels his shortcomings.

However, in sifting the best from his vast multitude of works we are gaining a more just estimate of Doré as an artist. He reached his best in illustrating Dante's "Inferno." He follows Dante and Virgil as they descend from circle to circle in the realm of the condemned and when they come to the ninth and last circle where traitors are punished Doré seems to have concentrated his forces until from the concealed mass of Judases we hear ringing down the centuries, "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed!" When the travellers come to this ice circle, Dante says,

"Then I beheld a thousand faces, made

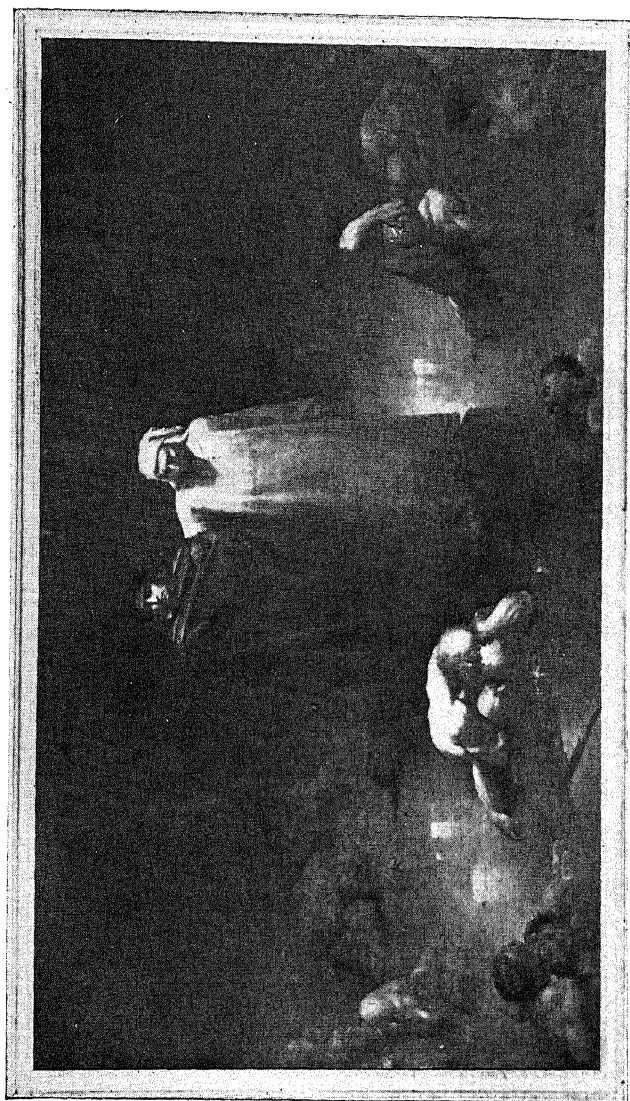


FIG. 174.—Dante and Virgil in the Inferno. Doré. Courtesy of the Southern Museum, Los Angeles, California.

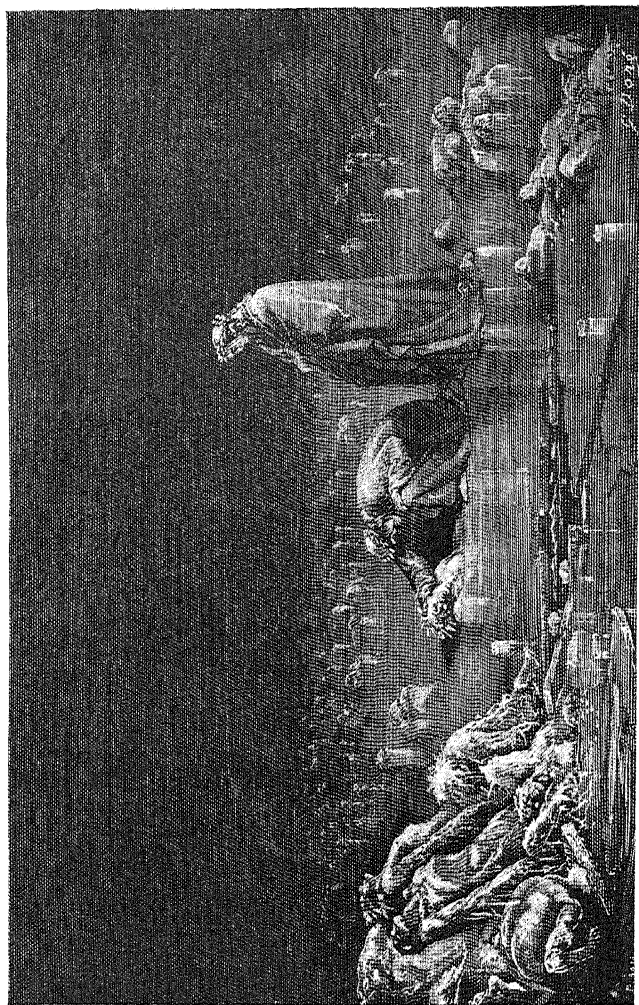


Fig. 175.—Dante and Virgil. Doré. Illustration from *Inferno*.

Purple with cold; whence o'er me comes a shudder.
And ever more will come, at frozen ponds."

(Inferno, Canto XXXII).

Doré has shown in his painting of "Dante and Virgil in the Traitor's Circle," Southern Museum, Los Angeles (Fig. 174), the dignity of just condemners in the attitude of the travellers overlooking the frozen pond that truly accords with the crimes committed. We gain a better idea of Doré as an artist in the painting though naturally his engravings follow the words of the poem more closely.

In Canto XXXII, line 97 (Fig. 175) Dante stoops, saying.

"Then by the scalp behind I seized upon him,

"And said: 'It must needs be thou name thyself,

"'Or not a hair remain upon thee here' "

Some other victim calls out "Bacca!" Dante spurns the traitor. That traitor who "with sword in hand, smote and cut off the hand of Messer Jacopo de' Pazzi of Florence." This side light on Dante's sympathies in the dramatic "Conspiracy of the Pazzi," is interesting though in the light of historic events the Medici cause seems the more just.

Doré entered into the spirit of the drama and with Dante he feels the depth of intrigue and revolution that brought about this horrible retri-

bution. The contortions of body are those of great mental agony rather than physical pain, but their tales of woe gain little sympathy from the travellers. Such whimperings over just punishment are common to cowards when caught in evil. Dante and Doré could illustrate with cutting truth the whinings of the world-war instigators today.

But Doré did not always choose tragic scenes. Every child in France bears witness that his illustration of *Les Contes de Perrault* is a constant source of delight. These tales, published in 1697, are the Mother Goose of French children. In fact the controversy still wages as to the French or American origin of Mother Goose. Our Boston Mother Goose (Mrs. Goose was the mother-in-law of Thomas Fleet, a Boston publisher) was published in Boston in 1719. Many French and American fairy tales are the same, such as: Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Puss in Boots, etc.

Any "Fairy Tale" (Fig. 176) is more fascinating after Doré has touched it. His love for children set his imagination free, and fancy followed fancy in a perfect riot of fun. Children and animals perfectly understand each other in every conceivable incident. Bird and cat and dog and squirrel is the child's equal and can ex-



FIG. 176.—A Fairy Tale. Doré.

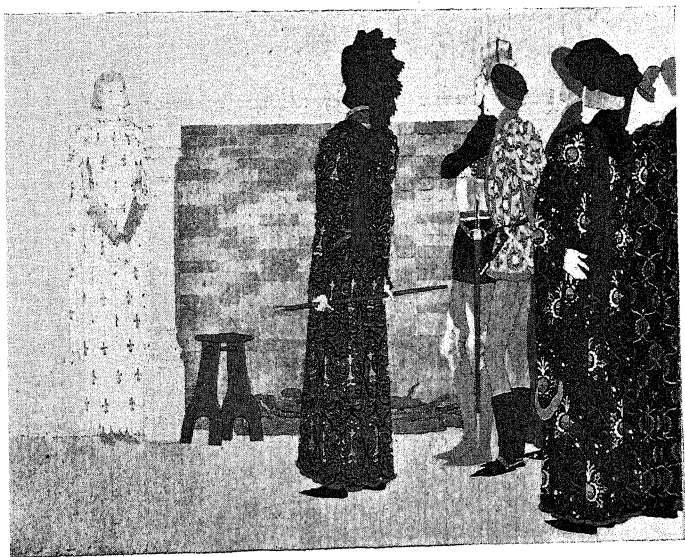


FIG. 177.—Jeanne d'Arc. De Monvel. Church of Domremy, France.

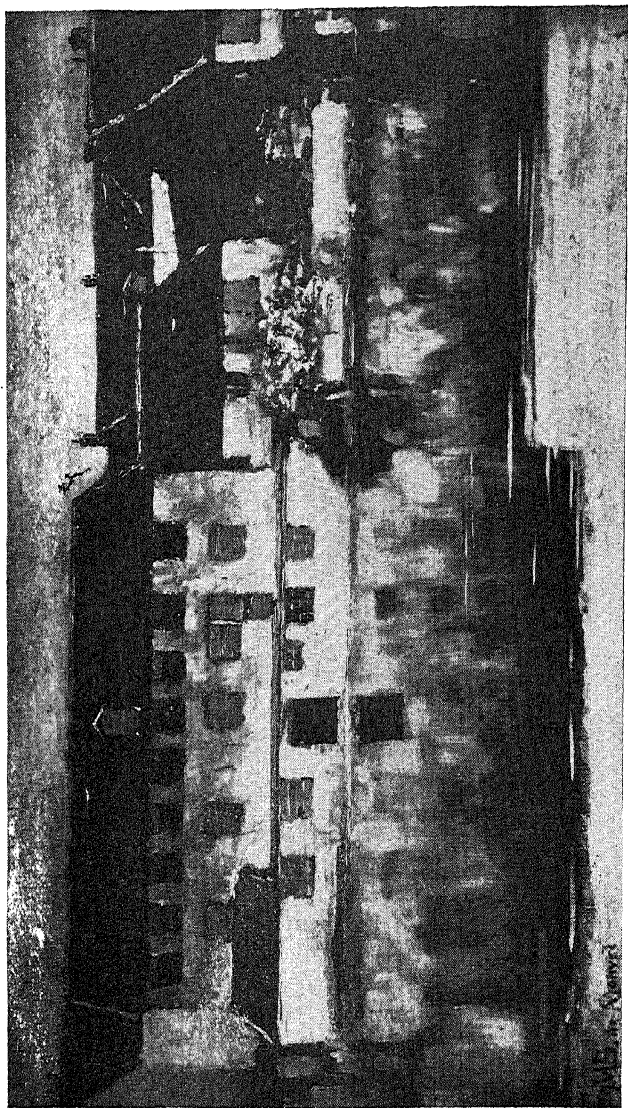


FIG. 178.—The Tannery. De Monvel. Courtesy of Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York.

press itself in a language that both understand perfectly. Doré certainly brings us nearer to those wonderful men, Jean de la Fontaine (1621-1695) and Charles Perrault (1628-1703), who understood the child's love for the marvelous in story. I wonder how many of our boys realized when in France that the home where La Fontaine was born and lived in Château Thierry was the library and museum of the town and that the German officers used it as a dugout.

It has been our privilege through the courtesy of Mrs. Cornelia Sage Quinton, Director of the Buffalo Museum, a close friend of the Boutet de Monvel family in Paris, to see a collection of Maurice Boutet de Monvel (1850-1913) at the Kigore gallery, New York City, en route to other cities. Certainly our eyes opened wide with astonishment at his knowledge of the true-to-nature child, whether an adult child or a real one. His profound comprehension of the child mind is a psychologic penetration of humanity. Like many another artist, de Monvel was forced into illustration, but unlike the great army in that line he made it a true art. De Monvel in substance said, about having only the pen to work with, "The greatest difficulty was to find something that would come out well . . . gradually through a process of elimination and selection I came to put

in only what was necessary to give character. I sought in every little figure, every group, the essence and worked for that alone."

Every child who sees them, wherever he lives, is the happier because of de Monvel's simple and beautiful interpretation of French songs. His Jeanne d'Arc is already a classic. In the little church at Domremy, the birth-place of the Maid, is his story told in fresco paintings of the marvellous career of that unique child of God. She was about eighteen when the iniquitous trial began that accused her of every crime possible from blasphemy to witchcraft. She was imprisoned and insulted. The great people of the nations came to look upon her—the terrible monster! Even the Duke of Burgandy came to see the witch, only to find "Jeanne, a girl of Eighteen" (Fig. 177). The scene is most striking in its simplicity. The lovely flat colour of the blue-grey predominating, intensifies the cruel curiosity of the black-robed, black-cowled dignitaries peering at her while keeping a safe distance.

"The Tannery," (Fig. 178) was the painting that kept beckoning us to return and sit by the dull gold, sluggish pond and enjoy the weather-beaten, ugly structures and feel the red-brown tan-bark under our feet. The whole is made beautiful by a glorious light and vibrant atmos-

phere. De Monvel knew that tannery—I wonder if he had ever worked in it. He knew the look of tannin stain and the feel of the fine tan-bark thrown out from the vats. Who ever thought of glorifying a tannery, yet De Monvel has caught the sprite that haunts every commonplace scene, if only the eye is taught to see it. The great majority of us only caught the ugly smell of tan-bark and turned away in disgust; he saw the glory of it and made us forget the disagreeable.

I have a friend, a Parisian, who was in Paris when James Joseph Jacque Tissot (1836-1902) first exhibited his pictures of the life of Christ. She said that never in the history of the French people was such depth of emotion expressed by young and old, rich and poor, aristocrat and peasant. They came on the cars, in carriages and on foot. They entered the gallery of the Louvre, where the pictures were exhibited, as though performing a religious ceremony—many on their knees—and spent hours praying and sobbing before each scene represented, until the sound of their supplications filled the air. No such demonstration was ever recorded of the reception of religious pictures, not even of Cimabue's "Madonna and Child" in Italy. As we look at the pictures in the Brooklyn Museum today the ques-

tion intrudes, "What held the people?" Probably the earnest sincerity of the artist.

Tissot lived those scenes in Palestine. He spent ten years putting himself in close touch with Oriental life and thought. He visited every spot made dear by the actual presence of the Saviour. He verified every incident in the Bible story by scenes from today. No doubt costumes and customs have changed very little in Palestine in twenty centuries, and these pictures reproduce settings and make more comprehensible special terms and sayings. But of fundamental truths, and our Saviour always dealt with elemental truths, the old masters gave a deeper meaning and a more universal interpretation of the gospel story. We need to know the history of yesterday to understand more fully the tendencies today, but the visible life of yesterday cannot be reproduced. Only the unalterable spirit of truth is permanent, and all earnest thinkers probe for truth.

In no picture does Tissot grasp Oriental dignity with greater fervour than in "The Magnificat," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 179). It is the simple story of the Apocrypha. "But Mary, being ignorant of all these mysterious things which the angel Gabriel had spoken to her, lifted her eyes to heaven and said, Lord! what



FIG. 179.—The Magnificat. Tissot. Brooklyn Museum. Courtesy of John H. Eggers Company, New York City.

am I that all the generations of the earth should call me blessed?" The look of surprise and wonder on the faces of the other two carries the conviction that the song, "more than a psalm," is a revelation to them. Opinions differ as to the author of this marvellous plan of promise and praise, yet the simple Bible story carries the conviction that no controversy shakes. Tissot's conception of the "handmaid of the Lord" is full of the earnestness of one who could say "Be it unto me according to thy word." His colour of the soft Oriental robes under the vine covered enclosure is exceedingly harmonious, and the rich settings are in true accord with the wealth of the Saviour's boyhood days.

Tissot was born in Nantes and became a pupil of Flandrin (see page 159), the representative of the religious movement in art of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XXV

L'HERMITTE—LEROLLE—CARRIÈRE—
ROLL—BESNARD—MARTIN

IT is the good common sense of Leon Augustin L'Hermitte (1844-) that makes him refreshing. He paints peasant life as it is and not as he imagines it ought to be. The men in "The Harvester's Meal," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 180), are true workers of the fields. The scene is primitive in its elemental force, for it leads to the source of labour—the beginnings of the great industries that make the world hum today. The coming of the woman with the midday meal centres the scene in the home and we have a keener realization that after all is said the great problems are solved in the homes. L'Hermitte gives us something bigger than reaping because of careful digging and sowing. That stretch of cultivated ground reaching to the far horizon and including the little hamlet in the distance lightens the heart and lifts the soul on wings of hope. We know from the history of France down through the years that it is from persons



FIG. 180.—The Harvesters' Meal. L'Hermitte. Courtesy of Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.



FIG. 181.—Among the Lowly. L'Hermitte. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

with such environment that have come the great builders of the French people. Why? Because in these primitive people the elemental bigness of human beings is found.

Again "Among the Lowly," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 181), the artist compels a recognition of the great unseen power that is tugging and forcing humanity to a higher level. The world no doubt is like the proverbial cat getting out of the well but we know that after each awful disaster there comes out of the quiet of just existing at the source of material life a more comprehensive knowledge of what life means. We all stand before this lowly scene with uncovered heads for L'Hermitte has here given the keynote of the reconstructing power at work in France and in all the world today. I have seen strong men, gay society women and heedless youth stand reverently before the picture and little ones come near to it as though waiting for the Saviour to bless them too.

L'Hermitte born in Mont-Saint Père, a small hamlet in the Aisne in the north, lived most of his life in Paris. He started under Lecoq de Boisbaldran of Cognac near Bordeaux, a man who was more a chemist than an artist but who knew how to teach. L'Hermitte did not do much with his art until nearly forty years of age and then

his pictures of peasant life at once became popular. L'Hermitte represents without sentimentality strong, vigorous men and women going about their work. The settings have the poetry of the big-out-of-doors enveloped in vibrant atmosphere under the glow of the varying sun where lights and shadows are ever bringing fresh visions.

Henri Lerolle (1848-) is another artist who understands the life of the humble. Although his best known pictures are religious subjects as "The Arrival of the Shepherds," yet it is in "The Organ Recital," Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 182), that we recognize the power of the man. That solid dividing rail running diagonally across the picture certainly stimulates our curiosity in regard to the listening congregation. We fairly feel the stillness of the vast company gathered to hear the favourite soloist. The other members of the choir are perfectly subordinated to the singer. She is superb in her simplicity. Not even the dress so monstrous in its abnormality—imagine making ourselves human beings with a hump!—cannot detract from her charm and personality.

Again an artist of the period with most decidedly original ideas, though not always desirable ones, was Eugene Carrière (1849-1907). He

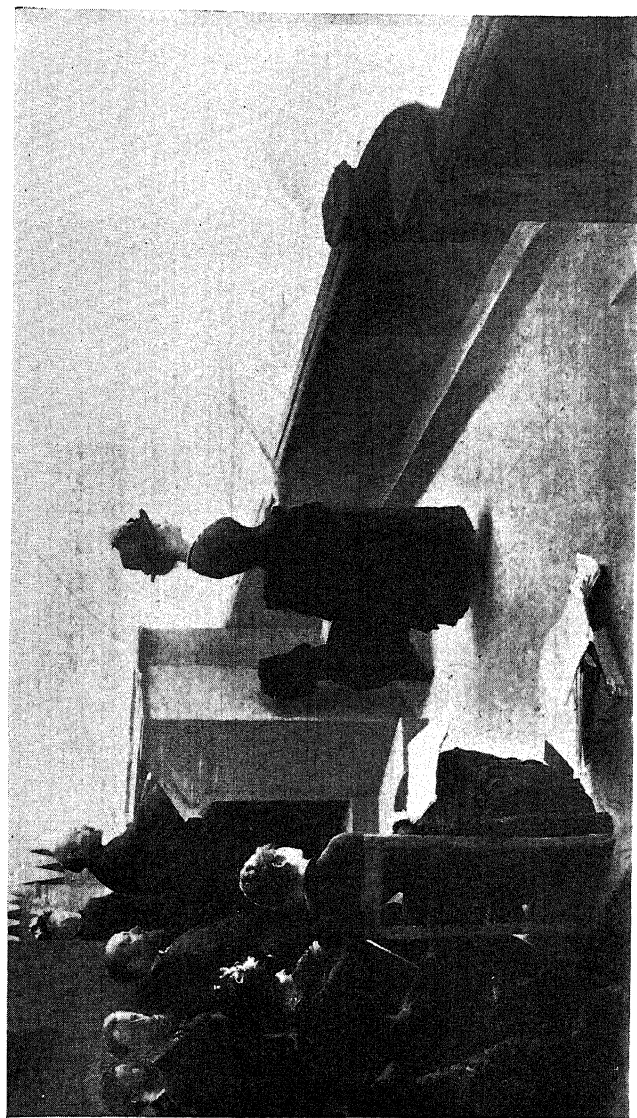


FIG. 182.—The Organ Recital. Lerolle. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



FIG. 183.—A Family Scene. Carrier.

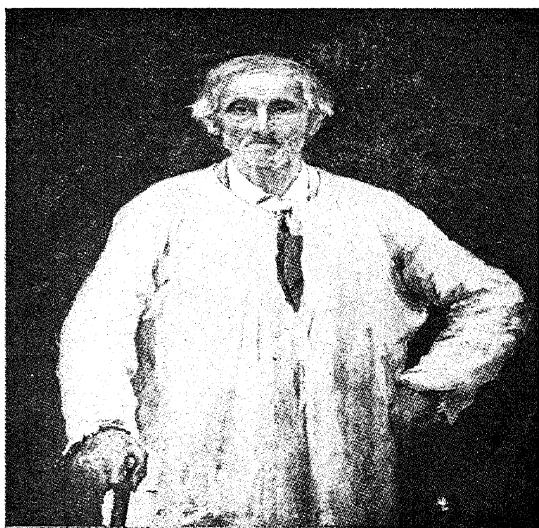


FIG. 184.—The Old Quarryman. Roll.

was born in Gournay not far from Rouen. He first studied in Ecole des Beaux Arts under Cabanel but later came under the influence of Whistler. Cabanel and Whistler were about as opposite as two artists could well be and between the two extremes Carrière landed on the ground most of the time. He even joked at his own expense. One day standing before a domestic scene of his in Luxembourg, "Voilà!" said he, "some one has been smoking in the nursery." When he was thirty years old he painted a "Nursing Mother" now in the Avignon Museum, the popularity of which was his undoing. One critic said at the time, "From that time on his dream was fixed."

Over and over again Carrière pictured these home scenes with an intimate, sympathetic understanding. One wonders, however, if always he painted while puffing a cigar. Every picture is so enveloped in a haze of smoke that it takes the liveliest imagination to visualize the subject. "The Family Scene," Luxembourg (Fig. 183), is one of Carrière's best pictures. One feels however, that his pictures are not only a historic record of his own fireside but of all French firesides. The devotion of the mother is that of one whose whole being is absorbed into the life of her growing offspring. She lives their fleeting emotions

with an intensity that is using her life blood, little realizing how futile is such a sacrifice of strength to early childhood. It is the problems later in their lives that will need mother at her very best.

There are always persons coming to the front with such a sense of just proportion that they gather to themselves the salient traits of particular movements and give back to the world products replete with their own originality. Such a man was Alfred Philippe Roll (1846-). He was born in Paris and studied under Gérôme and Bonnat. The Barbizon protest had borne its fruit. Manet and Monet were no longer world wonders. Impressionism was absorbing, distorting, disgusting and correcting in varying degrees. It takes a genius with wonderful common sense to incorporate new ideas and not undermine fundamentals which destroy the progress of both old and new. Roll was a man big enough not only to give an art commensurate with his talent, but to profit by the wider vision and not lose his soul. Just to look into the face of "The Old Quarryman" (Fig. 184) convinces one of the artist's understanding of real life. To one who recognizes the sturdy independence of the rank and file of the French nation this man stands as a type. It is easy to see in him the reason why the stability of the people depends upon the inhabitant of the

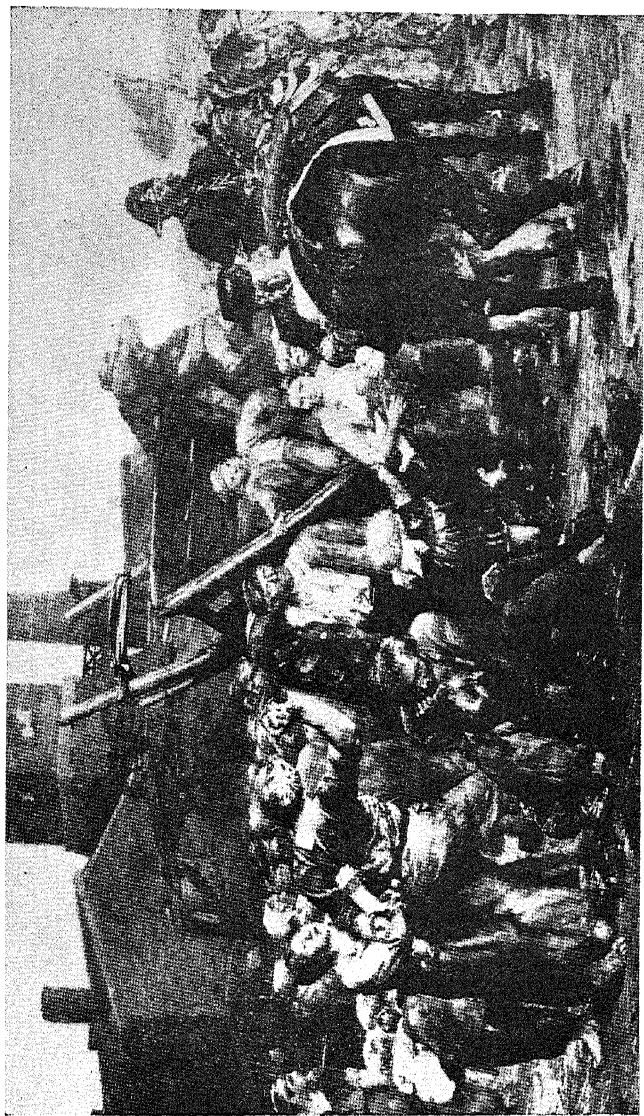


FIG. 185.—The Strike of the Miners. Roll. Valenciennes Museum, France.

rural districts. This man has worked and saved all his life. His strength is that of one who has his surplus wealth within his own grasp. He lives and dies going through the routine of his ancestors and nothing of ordinary affairs moves him. He has no abstract ideas of patriotism but when his country is threatened through his home he fights like a roused tigress. Those eyes are smouldering embers and that frame is still potential.

Roll's art is many sided. As an official painter commemorating special occasions he is unrivalled. His picture of "July 14," in the Petit Palace, Paris, represents the Fourth of July celebration of the French. A jollier scene scarcely could be imagined. And at Versailles are his two interpretative paintings setting forth the new spirit of democracy. One is "The Commemoration of the Centennial of 1789," with Carnot surrounded by public celebrities of the time. The scene is laid in the marvellous park of Louis XIV. A dull golden light softens the wanton extravagance that brought forth such a marvel and intensifies the determined spirit of independence—the significant undertone of the gathered multitude.

In the Museum of Valenciennes is Roll's "Strike of the Miners" (Fig. 185) painted in 1880. In no picture has the artist shown a

keener understanding of the individual human element in a crowd. The scene is powerfully held together by the underlying cause of the strike, yet the impelling forces at work in the separate groups add interest to the whole. Roll shows his power in his splendid control of the various actors in the turbulent scene. He holds us by his ordered manipulation in composition, in his understanding use of light and shade and the atmospheric vitality which permeates the gathering multitude to the very last straggler on the outskirts.

Roll was influenced by the impressionists but he had the rare good sense to select the best—that is what all reformers are trying to do but not always wisely—and at the same time he held on to the fundamentals governing art since its beginning.

Another man who came under the spell of the new movement was Paul Albert Besnard (1849-). In fact Besnard was one of the founders of "The New Salon"—a centre that shook the Academy to its very foundations and its influence was felt in all western art. Those who came to the New Salon to laugh at the exhibition—and there was much to be laughed at—departed to think, to read, to readjust and to realize that academic art was in a rut and needed prodding.



Fig. 186.—Decoration (detail). Besnard. Ecole de Pharmacie, Paris.

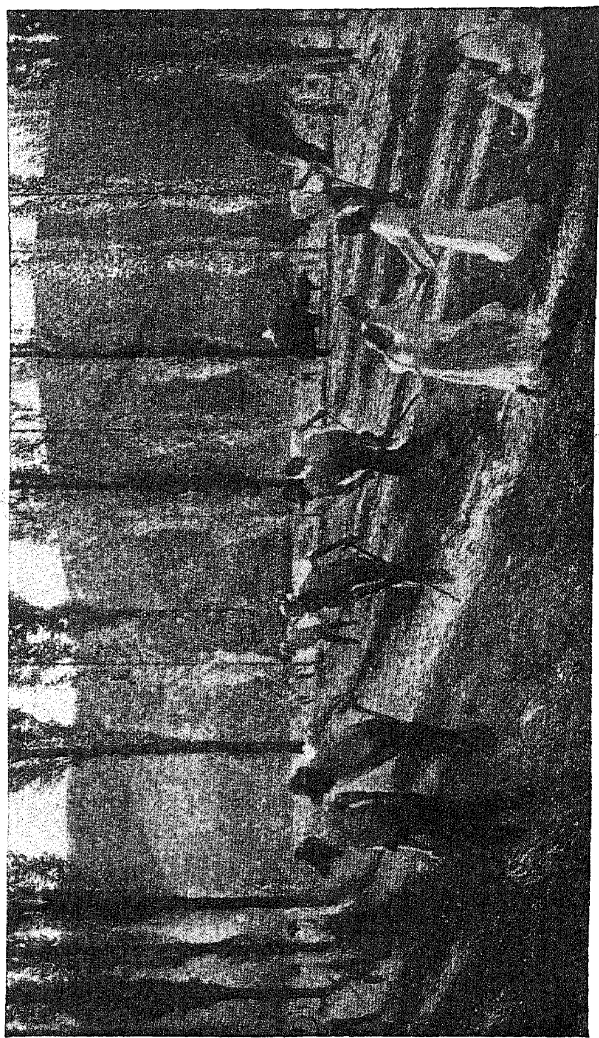


FIG. 187.—The Reapers. Martin.

No man of the New Salon was so thoroughly new without being extreme as Besnard. He was a wonderful colourist and knew perfectly the effect of light.

Besnard was born in Paris and first studied under Cabanel. He spent three years in England after his return from study in Rome under the Prix de Rome sanction. His first order after his return to Paris was the decoration of the vestibule of the School of Pharmacy. This was the beginning of decorating public buildings, the Hotel de Ville, the Sorbonne, Theatre Francois, etc. Even in "A Detail," from the Ecole de Pharmacie, Paris (Fig. 186), we get the artist's decorative instinct. The substantial vertical lines, the buildings, trees and figures form a groundwork for the daintily decorative vines, scrolls, shadows and flapping clothes as they assert themselves in the scene; and the little child in the foreground forms the key note with her curving body repeated by the trees on the hill top and her tiny outstretched arms paralleling the numberless roof-combs and brow of the hill marking the horizon line. The lovely colour and joyous light seem to give special efficacy to the health bestowing institution.

"The Reapers," Toulouse (Fig. 187), is exceedingly attractive in its rhythmic movement. The row of straight birch trees stretched across the

middle distance is the harp and the swaying figures the player's fingers sweeping the strings. The trembling shadows are the notes now high and shrill, then low and deep toned until the whole valley resounds with the music of "The Reapers." When Henri Jean Guillaume Martin (1860-) decorated the Hotel de Ville and other buildings of his native city, Toulouse, in none did he show his mastery of mural painting more than in "The Reapers." He may well be classed with Puvis de Chavannes (see page 189) as a French decorator. His scenes are mostly idealized landscapes with enough of the human-work element to bring them close to us without intruding the stress of necessity. His colour scheme is that of a well balanced poem where the cadence lingers in the memory long after the words are forgotten.

CHAPTER XXVI

PISSARRO—CEZANNE—GAUGUIN—VAN
GOGH—MATISSE

CAMILLE PISSARRO (1830-1903) was a man as well as an artist. If there ever was a time when real men were needed in French Art it was when the first wave of impressionism swept over the country. Impressionism took its name from painted impressions by various artists beginning with the picture Monet exhibited in the Salon of 1867 which he called "Impressions." The public liked the word and hence "Impressionism" became the name of the movement. Over and over again the old Salon refused to exhibit the works of the impressionists until finally the emperor, Napoleon III, in 1863, gave them a separate hall, called Salle des Refuses, and there Manet, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Pissarro and others exhibited undisturbed.

When Pissarro came to the front, although he was older even than Manet, the new movement was beginning to take root. Pissarro himself

went a step further in the use of pigments and instead of placing the prism notes in lines side by side as Monet advocated he used tiny points of pigment. This method gave a uniform sense of colour with the canvas nearer the eyes, and became known as Pointillism or Neo-Impressionism. This really illustrates most forcefully the real import of impressionism. To paint things as they impress the beholder through the medium of light and air is no doubt the fundamental principle of true art, yet certainly light and air played strange pranks with some of the followers of the new movement. Surely liberty is license when the canvas is a blur of pigments unless a volume of fifteen or more feet of air is interposed between the beholder and the would-be picture.

Now look at the "Great Bridge at Rouen," Carnegie Institute of Art, Pittsburgh (Fig. 188), as Pissarro shows it to us. The longer we study the picture the more the artist's wonderful understanding of the effect of light and air impresses us. Keyed in a high colour note the effect of the whole is tremendously picturesque and his emphasis of certain details is just enough to make us feel the intimate quality of that particular bridge. How amusingly effective are those columns of smoke and steam sturdily ascending into a sky

without a cloud. Somehow we feel that the man Pissarro is watching our enjoyment of the scene as he sits in one of those boats in the foreground.

Pissarro was born in St. Thomas, Danish West Indies. He was educated in Paris but his father, a merchant, insisted that he return to office work in St. Thomas. When twenty-two he ran off with a Danish painter who was passing through St. Thomas on his way to study the flora of Venezuela. The next step in his art career was his return to Paris where he came under the influence of Corot and Courbet. Not until 1866 did he really know the leaders of the impressionistic movement. Until 1871 Pissarro lived at Louveciennes, a town on the direct line of Prussian advance, then he left for London. His house was occupied by the Prussians where the destruction of his paintings became the special delight of the staff. Fine amusement indeed!

Pissarro delighted in painting domestic scenes from humble life. He never erred in giving just the point of view to awaken sympathetic interest. In this picture "La Petit Bonne de Campagne" (Fig. 189) nothing could be more charming than the wee glimpse of the dining room. The whole room could not thrill us more. The arrangement is simplicity itself. The pro-

cess of elimination is so perfect that every remaining detail is an absolute necessity to complete the picture. If it tells a story the story is so much a part of the daily life that it scarcely claims a thought. The fascination of the child, of the cup and saucer and flat jug on the table, of the peep into the room beyond and the luscious colour and the palpitating atmosphere is so great that we feel the grasp of the living presence in it all.

Pissarro was very closely associated with the artists of his time. His big wholesome manhood drew people to him but he always remained himself. As late as 1881 he said in protest,

"They are all throwing Millet at my head. But Millet was biblical! It is curious but for a Hebrew I don't seem to have much of that quality in me."

Pissarro was a teacher of many of the men who marked the next step in the art upheaval of the nineteenth century and extending into the twentieth century. I say upheaval advisedly for much of the spirit of change that was—no, is yet—abroad has the destructive quality of a bomb thrown into a quietly working factory of long standing. Of course earthquakes, fires, wars, tornadoes etc. sweep off much worthless trash which is fine but they also shake foundations

and then must come steady minded, sane men and women to repair the substructure. Pissarro was sane in building his art on a firm base and savouring it always with his own personality. The men who worked with him and under him could not fail to be a little stronger though some of them erred greatly when out from under the restraint of his cool judgment.

Possibly none of the seeking spirits who studied under Pissarro was more individual than Paul Cezanne (1839-1906). He was forty years growing up—a time, says he, filled with “literature and laziness.” During this time of early growing and later with Pissarro he was taking into and making part of himself elements of the impressionistic movement, and at the same time he was revelling in the company of the old masters in the Louvre, in Holland and in Belgium. Thus Cezanne’s equipment for experimental work in painting was far beyond the ordinary radical who was simply breaking away from restraint. The insurgents, trying to throw off the thralldom of Academic rule, were legion after Manet fought his fight, but few indeed were the men well grounded in fundamental principles. Yet when such a man as Cezanne, obsessed with the search for truth, not change, grounded on firm, unalterable principles, strikes out on a new line some-

thing worth while is attained. The pity is that the lay public should ever be permitted to witness the intermediate steps. We all know that Pelissy's neighbours, or his wife, care not one whit for his dream-like glaze; all they saw was the destruction of property and the crazy actions of one demented.

The public did take intelligent notice, however, when Cezanne gave it such a still life as "*Pommes sur une Table*" (Fig. 190). Rich in colour, treated in three dimensions bathed in a light sensitive to the least variation of surrounding illumination the picture palpitates with life. One feels the truth of the artist's statement, "Penetrate what is before you, and persevere in expressing yourself logically."

From the very beginning of his art career still-life was Cezanne's joy. He would spend years perfecting a study of flowers and fruit. We have his own verdict on a canvas of roses painted from paper models after three years of work. He says, in writing to the patron who commissioned the work.

"I find that I must postpone the shipment of your canvas—I shall delay for another year the completion of this study. I am not satisfied with the result so far obtained——"

Cezanne was born in Aux-en-Provence and to

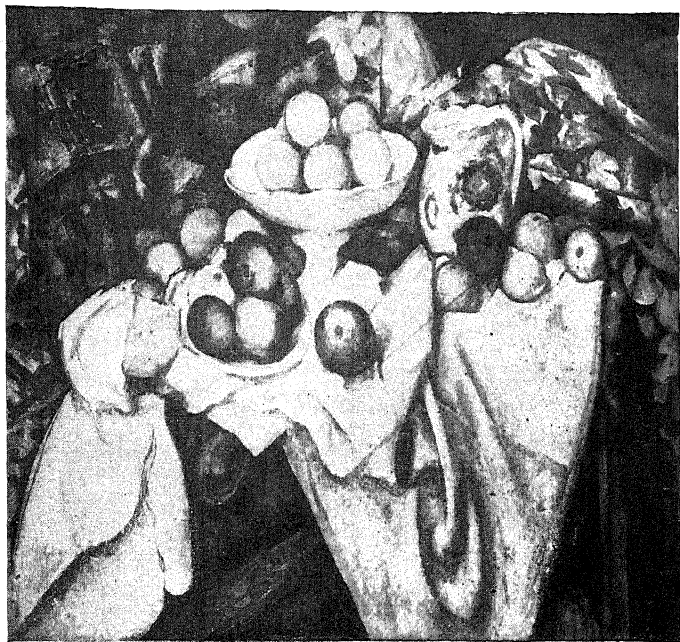


FIG. 190.—Pommes sur une Table. Cézanne.



FIG. 191.—Tahiti. Gauguin. Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

that southern country he returned when the ridicule of the public, the acrid criticism of his enemies and the cruel admonitions of his friends cut too deep to be longer endured. And in that country he died. The worth of Cezanne's experiments and the estimate of his art is still in the process of valuation.

At varying intervals of time the creative geniuses of the world turn their faces backward to primitive art. They wish to leap over all intervening epochs and make their beginnings in the same state of mind of the primitive himself. And each time the seekers in the quest positively believe the thing can be done; and each time it fails so far as we can judge. To become a primitive after the mind has developed under the influence of inherited knowledge of the ages is no more possible than forcing one's adult body into baby-clothes is possible. And when Paul Gauguin (1848-1890) and Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) assayed to return in mental attitude to the state of mind of the primitive savage the result was childish—not childlike.

Gauguin first studied under Pissarro. He readily absorbed the most radical ideas of the new movement and quickly broke away from them to follow his own ideals—ideals that found no favour with art lovers. He became dissatis-

fied with the restraints of civilization and sought relief in the South Seas. There among the savages abandoning civilized restraints, he gave free bent to his visions on canvas. He found these barbaric visions, however, on his return home were unacceptable to France. Later he again went to the islands where finally he died among the savage kindred spirits. His works were often called "fauves" (wild beasts) which may have given rise to the term "Fauvists" for revolutionists. He was wont to say to his objectors, "Your civilization is your disease, my barbarism is my restoration to health."

No one will deny that Gauguin's intense feeling for colour and his savage delight in creating pictures pulsating with the hot brilliancy of a tropic country gave a new note to decorative art. Naturally the French public could not accept his pictures so barbarous in import. Nevertheless his colour note of riotous joy, his great power in using colour, line and tone in giving simple visions bore fruit later in the works of saner men.

One can easily understand in "Tahiti," exhibited in the Brooklyn Museum, (Fig. 191) his wonderful grasp of the decorative element. Even in black and white the pattern, the repeated curves and the flat plane make an interesting picture and when to these elements are added

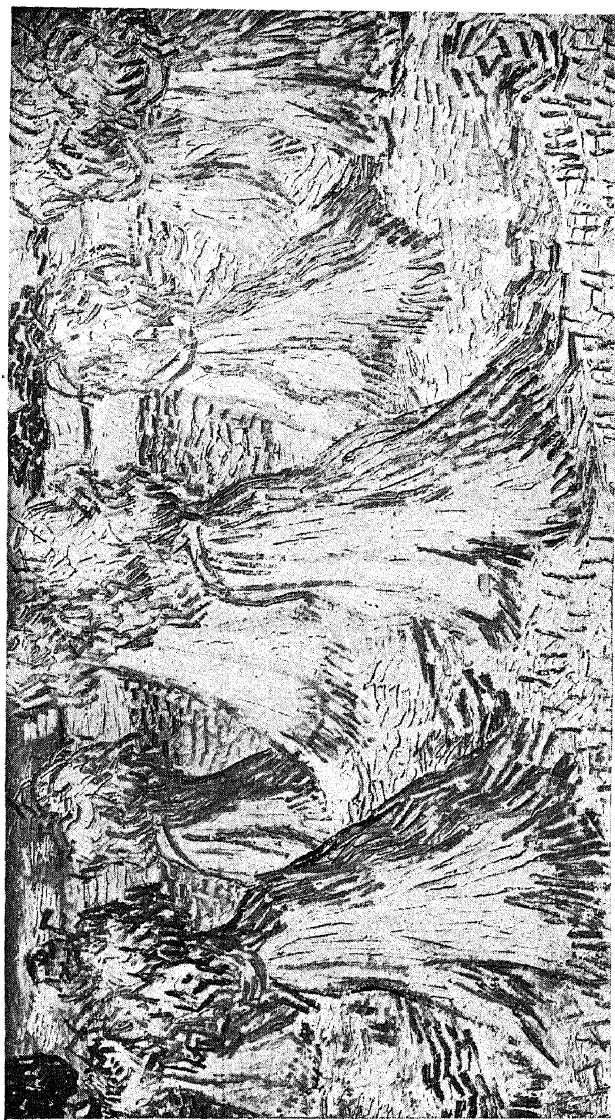


FIG. 192.—Corn Shocks. Van Gogh.

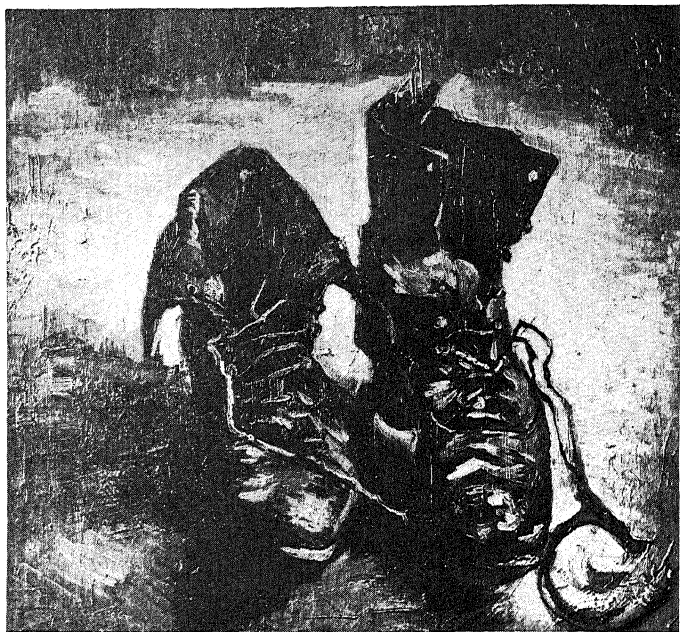


FIG. 193.—Old Shoes. Van Gogh.

the luscious colour of his fat palette one can feel the effect such a decoration would produce on the walls of a long hall.

Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) was born in Brabant, Holland, but all his art life was French if anything Van Gogh did could have any nationality. His life was a series of physical and mental upheavals and consequently much that he painted was without rhyme or reason. Gauguin said of him, "Van Gogh will never be contented until he has painted the sun!" which remark gives mildly in a nutshell the preposterous cravings of his distorted nature.

Van Gogh was the son of a clergyman and had a good education. His first venture in business with an art dealer gave him the advantage of travel and a wide knowledge of art. Strangely enough this business opportunity and others of like nature developed in him a queer mysticism that turned him to the study of theology; and then to preach among the miners. His health soon broke under the misguided enthusiasm of self-forgetfulness in his self imposed sacrifices to his work. After this episode, for each step in his career was an episode, he began his erratic career as a painter. Most of his paintings were produced in the two years between 1887 and 1889 when he lived at Arles in the south of France.

Gauguin spent several months with him but his life was in constant danger from Van Gogh's uncertain temper when he would often insanely attack him. Gauguin says that at night he would awaken with a start to find Van Gogh stealing across the room with a knife. In spite of these ravings he would paint furiously as many as four pictures a week—but were they pictures? these canvases grinning at one with the distorted fancies of a distorted brain?

What is to be the verdict of time and an informed public as to the artistic merit of "Corn Shocks" (Fig. 192)? It surely gleams with the colour of a sun-struck brain; and sways and lurches under the passion of a storm tossed vision. "Old Shoes" (Fig. 193) is another freak of his brush for posterity to quarrel over unless the shoes go to pieces from sheer disintegration. Those shoes might typify the wear and tear of his poor brain under the terrible visions beating a constant tattoo upon it. Van Gogh's end could scarcely have come otherwise than by suicide.

Henri Matisse (1869-) can scarcely be classed a futurist, his painting of three nudes breaks their dictum that the nude must be abandoned. Although he was once a revolutionist yet one could hardly call his works *fauvist*. As an eclectic, however, his work is more an evolution

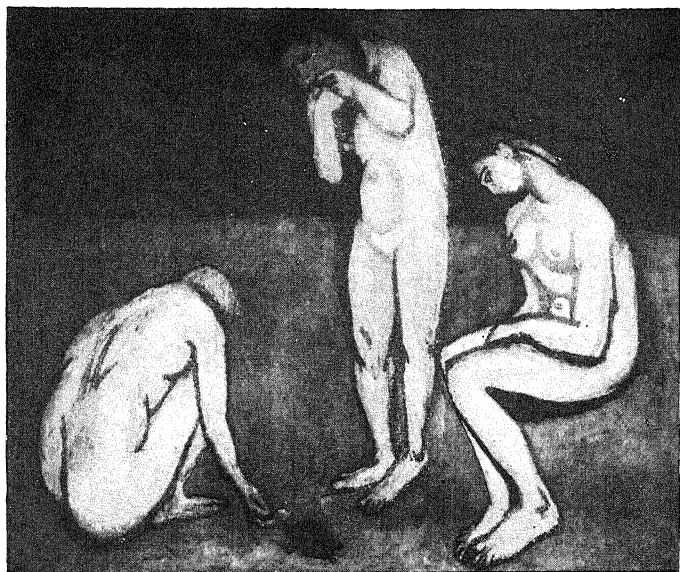


FIG. 194.—Baigneuses. Matisse.

in which he passes through various phases never losing a certain originality but ever intimating that "He has walked through my chapel!" as Michael Angelo said of Raphael on seeing the latter's sibyls.

Matisse was born in Cateau, north of Paris, the ancient city noted for many high lights in the history of Europe especially the treaty in 1559 between France, Spain and England when France retained Calais; later France and Spain returned most of their acquired possessions. Matisse was a pupil of the Ecole des Beaux Arts and for years worked in the Louvre making copies for the government. It was after this laborious preparation that, in an article for the *Revue des Arts*, he said, "That which I pursue above all else is expression. I condense the signification of the body by looking for the essential lines. . . . I dream of an art of equilibrium, of purity, of tranquility."

Sometimes his expressions are in pure form as in this "Baigneuses" (Fig. 194), where three nude figures on the sand express his feeling of muscular stress in certain attitudes. The stooping one playing with a turtle is universal in its appeal. Sometimes the form and colour are doubtless foreign to our preconceived notions yet they both make us think.

We look and wonder at his "Le Chapeau de Cuir" (Fig. 195). We turn away and again turn and look. The "essential lines" are there and no one could mistake the physical or mental makeup of that young woman.

Matisse's home at Issy-les-Moulineaux is simply one of many even to the personal element of interior, in kind and arrangement of belongings—probably the feminine behind the throne was the regulating power here. It is well for us to heed the great teacher's mandate in passing on the merits and demerits of these seekers after the truth. Judge not, if ye are not willing to be judged, the more natural rendering. Only a future judgment of the movement can approximate its value. We do know, however, the imitators of these men are making a terrible mess of the movement.

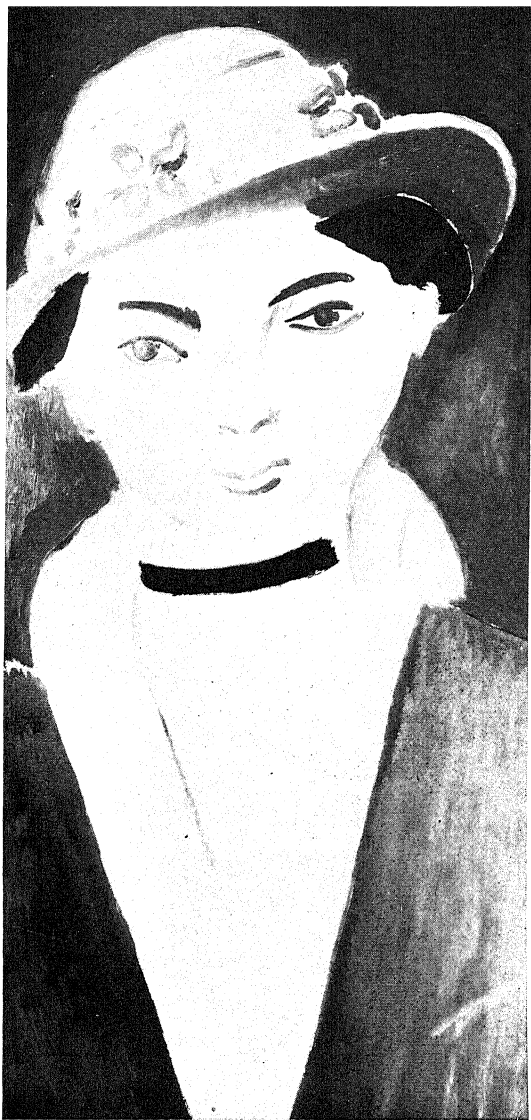


FIG. 195.—Le Chapeau de Cuir. Matisse. Courtesy of Bernheim-Jeune.

CHAPTER XXVII

BASTIEN-LEPAGE—RAFFAËLLI—DAG-
NAN-BOUVERET—FORAIN

JULES BASTIEN-LEPAGE (1848-1885) used to say, when people asked how he painted: "I have no fixed rules and no particular method. I paint things just as I see them, sometimes in one fashion, sometimes in another, and afterwards I hear people say that they are like Rembrant or like Clouet." It is very strange how we always insist on pigeon-holing persons of genius—as possible a feat as making a plow horse out of Pegasus. Bastien, the artist assumed his mother's name, Lepage, began his career just as the new isms in art were clamouring the loudest. The usually normal pendulum was swinging with such violence in its dark chamber that it banged first one side then the other not knowing how to regulate itself. Young artists were being caught in this violent swing. Many were thrown off but some steadied themselves and grew calm under the stress. Among the latter was Bastien-Lepage. He with clear sighted judgment laid

his foundation under severe Academic training. Then he began to realize the joy of his own impressions of nature and was able to give in a simple natural way without any forced methods and crude colour such a picture as "The Wood Gatherer," Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee (Fig. 196). It is just an ordinary incident in the life of the old wood gatherer and his little granddaughter. Yet out of that every day scene Bastien has frankly grasped the essential elements and given us a bit of real life perfectly charming in its simplicity.

Bastien-Lepage was big enough to defy the Academicians in Paris and paint a scene as he saw it even if it was a wood pile in his own back yard. Of course he was rebuffed again and again in contending for the Prix de Rome. His defeats, however, were spurs to further original work until finally success came, alas! only as he laid down his brush at thirty-seven.

One of the best loved pictures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is Bastien-Lepage's "Jeanne d'Arc" (Fig. 197), and without question it is the best known picture of the French peasant girl who dreamed dreams and saw visions. Bastien paints Jeanne with wide open eyes seeing spiritual visions and hearing celestial voices. If she seems too old for thirteen years



FIG. 196.—The Wood Gatherers. Bastien-Lepage.
Courtesy of the Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee,
Wisconsin.



FIG. 197.—Jeanne d'Arc. Bastien-Lepage. Courtesy of the
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

we must bear in mind the great mission the voices laid upon the young shoulders and the opposition she met on all sides. The head officer to whom she applied for troops cried,

"She is crazy; box her ears and take her to her father." But Jeanne insisted, exclaiming,

"I will go if I have to wear my legs down to my knees."

The dramatic scenes that followed each other so rapidly in the history of France and England until Charles VII was crowned king of France at Rheims in 1429 are full of legend and facts. But we do know that had Jeanne been allowed to go back to her sheep fold and spinning both countries would have been spared one of the most disgraceful events in their whole history. The trial of Jeanne d'Arc was held under the direction of the English and conducted by her own countryman, Bishop Beauvais. As we look at this picture of her we say with real sorrow,

"Poor girl! the very stones of France must cry out at the injustice of your cruel death."

Bastien was often called the peasant realist of modern France. His realism, however, has the quality of nature herself as seen through the enveloping atmosphere when we feel the beauty of the trees and the sunset without wishing to examine into the whys and wherefores. Possibly

St. Paul saw nature in the same spirit when he said to the Corinthians, "Now we see through a glass darkly" (I Cor. 15: 12). Surely a baffling uncertainty tantalizing and fascinating does spread over the fields of France when the sun is overcast and the air heavy with an impalpable mist. And no one knew better how to catch the glory of it than Bastien-Lepage. No wonder his peasant scenes pleased the people.

When the "Portrait of Sarah Bernhardt" (Fig. 198), was exhibited in the Paris Exhibition in 1900, the public at once recognized "the fair idolatress," and her graven image. The picture painted in 1879 is in soft grey tones. The cream flesh and red hair and old-ivory white image against the steel-grey background framed in a steel-coloured moulding give exquisite pleasure as a fit setting to the brilliant actress.

A strange fulfilment of a wish came with Bastien-Lepage's death. His desire had been that his final work should be of his beloved France's deified heroine. Ten days before he died a clay image of "Jeanne d'Arc listening to the Voices" was set up in a brick-yard seen from his bedroom window. In summing up the movement of the time one critic says, "Manet sowed, M. Bastien-Lepage has reaped."

It was my good fortune to see the first



FIG. 198.—Portrait of Sarah Bernhardt. Bastien-Lepage.



Copyright, Carnegie Institute

FIG. 199.—Boulevard des Italiens. Raffaelli. Courtesy of the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh.



FIG. 200.—Place St. Germain des Prés, Paris. Raffaelli. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

exhibition of Jean François Raffaëlli's (1850-) paintings shown in New York City nearly a score of years ago. My impression was that of a world decked in white—and a wonderful world it was too. White was the prevailing tone, white against white, white superimposed upon white. Over and over again Raffaëlli paints Paris and the very life and spirit of his beloved Parisians are in his brush. We feel that he must be sitting at one of the tables sketching the crowd hurrying along the "Boulevard des Italiens, Paris," Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh (Fig. 199). Look at the young woman who is in haste to go somewhere yet I doubt if she could tell why she is so eager only that Paris is in her blood. Paris does get into the blood and Raffaëlli knew it. Paris is in the man with the dog, in the waiter with the napkin over his arm, in the man selling papers, in the woman by the sign post and even the horses are Paris bus horses.

Raffaëlli is indeed a law unto himself in his manner of painting. So startling were his pictures that artists of Paris whistled softly, began to examine them and then to admire. They realized that the peculiar sketching in was not done with charcoal crayons but apparently with an unknown medium original with Raffaëlli which proved to be solid oil paint crayons. The artists

at once accepted the crayons recognizing their value in the light airy quality of the sketch.

From mere sketching crayons Raffaëlli elaborated his discovery making a great variety of crayons covering the various tints on the artist's palette until it is possible to paint pictures with these crayons and not use brushes. Of course this does not do away with the painter's brush but it does widen the means at his disposal.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has a fine example of Raffaëlli's of the "Place St. Germain des Pres, Paris" (Fig. 200). The Church of St. Germain belonged to the famous old abbey of the sixth century and the present nave of the building dates back to the eleventh century. The bronze statue in the little square is of Bernard Pelissy (d. 1589). Again we feel the delicious pulsing of Paris in the coming and going of the figures bathed in that glorious sunlight. How quiet and peaceful the tall spire raises itself above the little park. And the cool shadows, how urgently they invite us to sit awhile and meditate.

There could scarcely be artists more varied in style than the men now bordering on three score and ten years. This is specially true in France where so many influences were—and are still—breaking up the old style and starting new ones. Naturally none could move along the old beaten

path again and no one man could follow the numerous vagaries in the air. But a new spirit was born, a spirit of independence. Each person realized as never before the necessity of individual delving or his identity was lost. Naturally men well trained in the fundamentals of art started without handicaps and Pascal Adolphe Jean Dagnan-Bouveret (1852-) was of that number. He studied under Gérôme but just failed in the Prix de Rome. However, after receiving a first medal in 1878 the public believed he could make pictures and artists found he could paint. He, like many other painters of the generation first went to Brittany for his subjects. The picturesque costumes and customs gave wonderful material for his pictures. He painted the Brittany Pardon with its various religious functions, and gives to the ancient rite the solemnity of an actual incident. His keen eye in selecting compositions both interesting and dignified, his accurate drawing and his delicate sense of the appropriate colour notes raise his pictures to a high standard of excellence. Whether the individual quality of the man is strong enough to endure is an open question.

We are bound to acknowledge that the conception of the "Madonna of the Rose," Metropolitan

Museum of Art (Fig. 201), is a most personal one. The glowing light around the mother is Correggionesque though the hidden source of the radiance is Bouveretesque. A tender home spirit envelops the group even if the scene is in a rough work-shop with the carpenter's tools on the bench and wall. Very lovely is the bowl of roses reflecting the delicate flesh tints of the precious child in the mother's lap. This picture speaks to the great heart of humanity. Few pass it in the gallery; not that it tells a story or is unusual as a picture but it has human warmth.

Not since Daumier (see page 161) has such a caricaturist arisen as Jean Louis Forain (1852-). Just one look at the "Law Courts" (Fig. 202) convinces one of his power to cut deep in exploring crooked practices in the name of the law. Those six sleek, well groomed lawyers, like gluttoned animals of prey, are gradually closing in on their victims leaving no loop hole of escape. The poor wreck of humanity in the centre with his innocent dependents has no more show than a bleating ewe with her bleating lambs. Forain is a painter. His compositions unerringly express in their simplest manner the thought he has in mind. Absolutely the various groups in the picture intensify the crying need of justice. The scene enters our very soul and



FIG. 201.—Madonna of the Rose. Dagnan-Bouveret. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

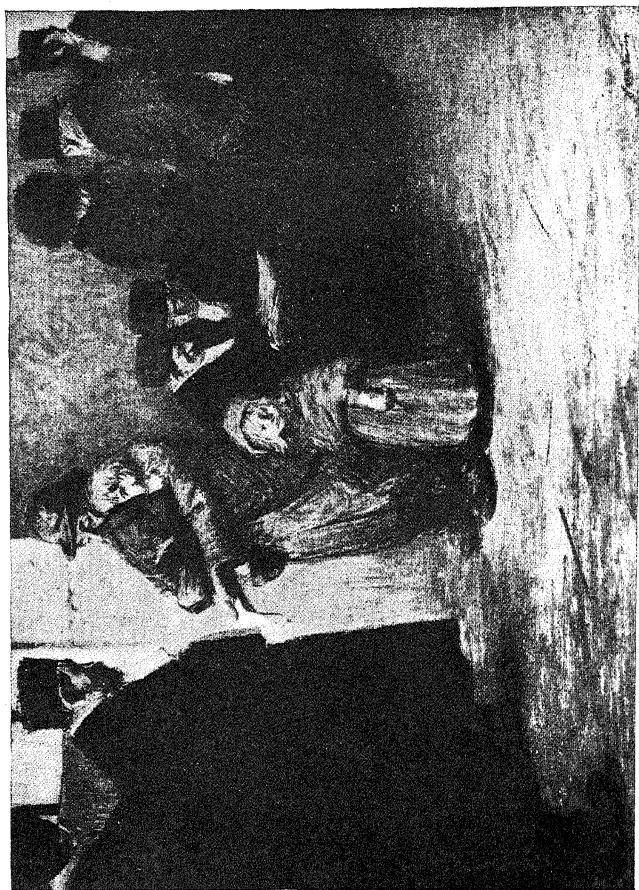


FIG. 202.—The Law Courts. Forain.

asserts that we all are our brother's keeper and that we must see to it that justice is done. It is just that that Forain has been doing for France and all humanity. Caricature to him means more than surface exaggeration of defects—it means exposing defects of the soul. He, as an illustrator, has raised the standard of all other illustrators. Not alone law courts have come under his scalpel but every department of life, high and low, rich and poor. Wherever the evil one is doing his work. How splendid it would be to have Forain's pictures on the walls of every house harbouring evil. He, like Hogarth, is cutting to the core of the festering sores that are undermining our country. If only evil could be brought to the light it would die, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds be discovered." (John 3:20).

Forain was born in Rheims. What must he think of his poor, shattered city? Even he with his keen unhesitating probe, must be appalled at the dastardly deeds done there.

CHAPTER XXVIII

AMAN-JEAN—BLANCHE—L. SIMON—
MÉNÂRD—COTTET—GARRIDO

THERE are always artists in every age who seem to stand for good common sense in their art. They paint, because they love to make pictures of the people and objects around them. They see life and feel joy in living and that to them is art. One of these real geniuses is Edmond François Aman-Jean (1860-) who paints because he loves to paint.

Aman-Jean was born in Chevey-Cossigny, a little village at the juncture of the Marne with the Seine, about three miles from Paris. Possibly this nearness to the great art centre while still living surrounded by the big out-of-doors may have made him sensitive to a wider range in the field of art. His power to eliminate from nature scenes everything but the decorative principle has given special significance to his mural decorations. In "Les Eléments," a mural panel for the New Sorbonne, Paris (Fig. 203), his



FIG. 203.—Les Éléments. Aman-Jean. New Sorbonne, Paris.



FIG. 204.—The Artist's Daughter. Aman-Jean.



Copyright Carnegie Institute.

FIG. 205.—Portrait of Duchess of Rutland. Blanche. Courtesy of the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa.

swing of line and harmony of design have brought together most forcefully elemental and acquired attributes. The tremendous destructive power swaying the trees and sweeping over the earth and water beyond is wonderfully controlled by the idyllic scene in the foreground. Seemingly there are two distinct themes in the picture, force and peace. Yet very delightfully the artist has made each subservient to the other. The hustle and bustle of the wind and water trail into lovely garlands, a quiet pool and an abundant harvest where man is the controlling power.

Aman-Jean has absorbed much from Japanese art which is seen in his flat flower and plant background and in his simple delicate touch in colour and line; and also, now and then, he reveals a Whistler note but this gathering from others never interferes one whit with his own original serious-minded art.

As a portrait painter Aman-Jean reveals the origin of the word *portraire*, to draw forth. He does more than make a surface likeness, yes, and more even than a psychological study for around his pictures of people hover the warmth of the individual. He uses an ingenious method in drawing that seems to extend beyond the outline without visibly doing so. In the "Artist's Daughter" (Fig. 204), we feel the warmth of

personality radiating from the contour of the child. An impalpable distinction surrounds her without making her different from other children.

Jacques Émile Blanche (1862-) has never made anything finer than the "Portrait of Her Grace the Duchess of Rutland," Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh (Fig. 205). We frankly admit that the artist could scarcely have chosen a subject around whom gathers a more fascinating history than that of the Duchess of Rutland. Ever since the days of the romance of the fair Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall when she eloped with Sir John Manners, son of the Earl of Rutland, in the sixteenth century, until today a living interest remains for every 'Duchess of Rutland. The baronial mansion of Haddon Hall is one of the finest examples of mediaeval architecture in England. Many tourists visit it, especially Americans, for we remember with gratitude that it was Sir John Manners, fourth Duke of Rutland, who protested, in 1775, against the taxation of the American colonies. He inherited Haddon Hall from his grandfather in 1779.

It is strange how Lucien Simon (1861-) reached the very heart of the peasant—though he was born in Paris. He does not picture so much of the work-a-day world as he does the religious ceremonies and holiday pastimes. His peasants



FIG. 206.—The Communicants. Simon.

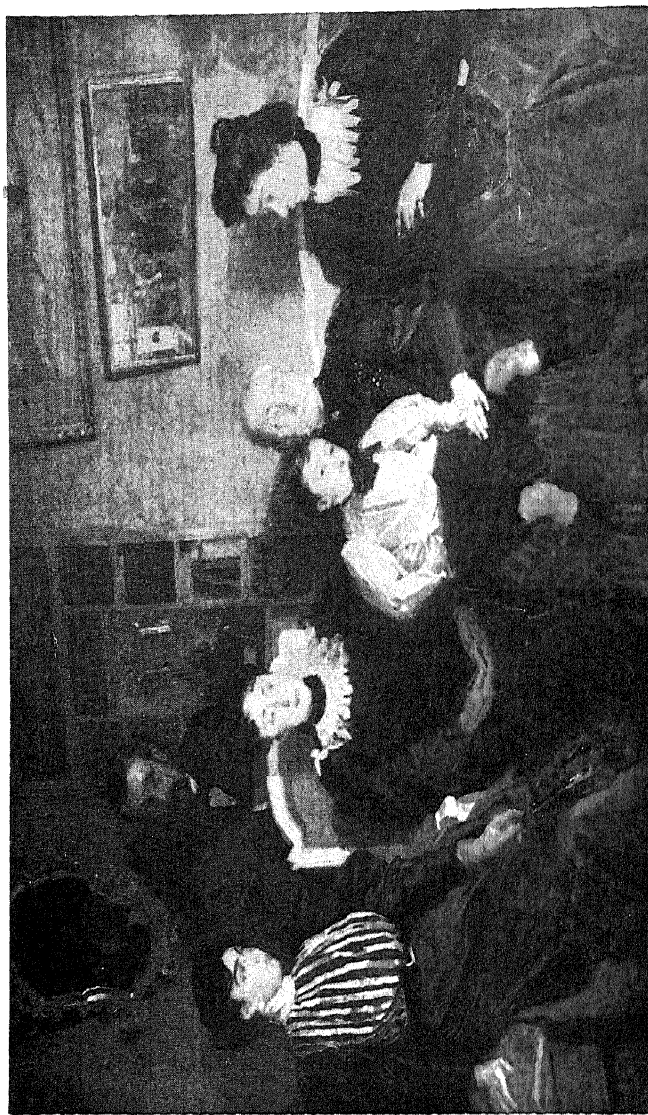


FIG. 207.—Portraits. Simon. Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia, Pa.

have more joy in their lives than Millet's had. He seems to penetrate through the bread-and-butter stage and reveal the essence in them that made it possible to produce such men as Millet.

When we look at such a picture as "The Communicants," exhibited in the Panama Pacific Exposition (Fig. 206), we are conscious that the same spirit of devotion that guided Millet's grandmother is here expressed. Those kneeling figures represent in the simplest terms the true spirit of worship. The expression of purity in the soft white is a fit accessory to the earnest faces of the devout company.

The group of "Portraits," Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia (Fig. 207), is particularly interesting in its commonplaceness. A word description of a group of six persons facing directly front almost in a straight line is far from pleasing yet Simon has vitalized the group until each member claims attention. We are first held by the grandmother and grandson for in those two is centred the great heart throb of the picture—the others are simply minor accessories.

We feel that Simon's figure pieces, whether a collection of portraits or a scene of some incident, have the attributes of real occurrences with certain idealized elements of the artist's own personality. His own words, telling his methods of

work, are most illuminating. He says: "I make a chance entry, and upon the first impression I make a rapid sketch in my note book of the large masses of the composition and the next day in the studio I execute the picture from memory."

While we recognize the influence of the 1830 men in Emile-René Ménard's (1860-) work and also realize that Bastien-Lepage came into his life, yet Ménard is himself the compelling note. A room full of his paintings gives a sense of am-
pleness whether the scene be the abundance of summer or the pent up strength of winter. The artist, perceiving nature's great reservoir of supply, paints her with a spirit of abandon that is particularly joyous. Just to look through the depth of those trees in "Woodland Nymphs," Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia (Fig. 208), is exhilarating. His mirroring of them in the tiny lake is specially fine in its reserved emphasis. Very charming is the shy boldness of the bushy branch leaning into the picture at the left and seemingly caught in the act by the water below. The bold outline of the flat top trees against the radiant sky marks one of the strong characteristics of Ménard's manner. He handles trees with a surety that gives confidence in his knowledge of them. His trees grow out of the earth and rightfully demand air and sunshine. The



FIG. 208.—Wood Nymphs. Menard.

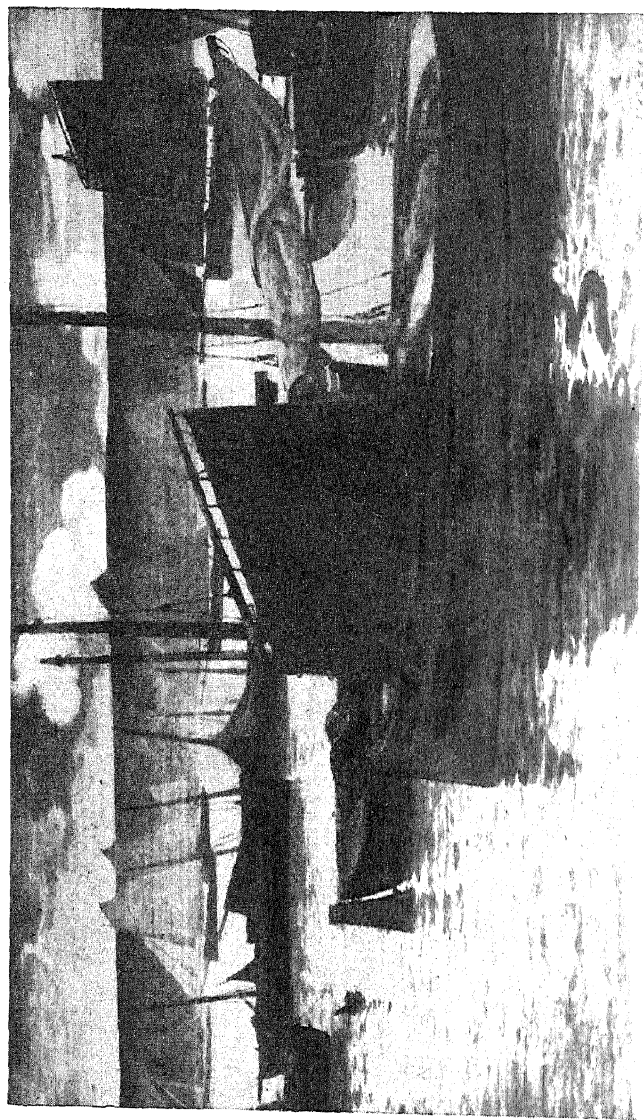


FIG. 209.—Marine. Cottet. Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia, Pa.

classic spirit of nymphs and water sprites which pervades many of his landscapes inspires wholesome thoughts and a longing for a simpler living.

Charles Cottet (1863-) is another man who knows the life of the people he paints. His Breton men and women give historic accounts of tragedies. Not often does the artist portray actual scenes of disaster but the story is told in the faces and figures of those whose lives are linked with the toilers of the sea. Even in the boats of the "Marine," Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia (Fig. 209), a tragic element lurks in the trim sails and stolidly built crafts without detracting, however, from the gaiety of a well equipped fleet ready for action—an action that makes for industry and contentment. Cottet is specially fine in preserving the French orderliness of character—a prominent trait in daily life of the people. The sturdy, well ordered preparation for each enterprise is the essential element in the French nation that is building the new France today, and the artists of the people are helpful in emphasizing that quality.

Leandro Garrido (1869-1909) was born in Bayonne of Spanish and English parents. This strange Spanish-English-French mixture gave the boy a wonderful artistic personality which no ill health or adverse environment could obliterate.

ate. He lived in England much of his early boyhood, then came to his beloved France and studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and in 1906 was elected to the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts. Most of his painting was done in Paris and France claimed him. His landscapes show his devotion to his adopted country.

Garrido was at his best in general subjects. It mattered little what subject he chose. "The Fish Wife" (Fig. 210) is rich and wholesome in its life problems. It is not surprising that he was known as "Le rieur Garrido" because he loved smiling faces. And why should not this fish wife smile? The children love her. Cleaning fish meant a delicious meal and a far more interesting pastime than eternal tatting, at least more interesting to us. That wrinkled face has the quality of the "Old Woman Cutting her Nails." She has lived and grown. She draws us to her because her philosophy of life holds good forever.

Garrido died in Gasse in 1909. He felt that he had only begun his life when the call came for him to lay it down. France had honoured him while alive and after his death a special exhibition of his paintings was accorded him in one of the Salons.



FIG. 210.—The Fish-wife. Garrido

CHAPTER XXIX

C.-DEVAILLE—DUFU—OBERTEUFFER—
A. LAURENS—B. BOUTET DE
MONVEL—MARCHAIN—
MONTÉZIN

IF there is any one thing that guarantees progress it is W O R K—spelled in capital letters. And when a young man or woman puts heart and soul into reaching a definite point, no matter how hard the work, something of value comes out of the effort. These remarks lead directly to Henri Caro-Devaille (1876-), a young French artist, who at twenty-one shut himself absolutely away from everybody and everything and for four years worked ten and twelve hours daily to perfect himself in his chosen life work. But in reaching the point where he could follow what he knew was his right was not easy, for his father insisted on business as his life work. At seventeen, a college man, he entered his father's bank. Two unhappy years followed, then he went into the army when fate—man's intelligence or stupidity—decided, through an injured leg, that army life was not his calling and that painting was.

Just one look at "Ma Femme et ma Petite Fille" (Fig. 211) is proof that the young man was right in choosing art for a career. Is it as decoration or a portrait group that the charm of this picture is the greatest? The rhythm of the design sings in every line of the composition. The swing and balance of the two figures is that of the swaying tree and undulating landscape beyond. Carodévaille learned his sanity in decorative quality from the simple methods of men of old. His paintings, whether mural or easel, are never lacking in decorative quality though the former naturally is a specialized product.

As late as 1917 the artist himself explains the requisites in mural painting. He writes: "Fresco requires not an imitation of reality, but its transcription in more intelligible terms. It must be one with the room; it must neither bore into the wall deeper than the deepest shadows, nor be more brilliant than its most brightly lighted regions. In a word it must be flat."

Mademoiselle Hélène Clementine Dufau's mastery of first principles in painting qualifies her for equally good work in mural painting and portraiture. When she was asked to paint panels for the science department of the Sorbonne, Paris, her conception of primal forces at once placed her among the growing artists of today. The sub-

jects of gravitation, electro-magnetism, geology and zoology took on new meanings in their relationship to man as expressed in mural painting. Her portrayal shows bigness of conception beyond the mere material import.

Mlle. Dufau is a native of Quinsac, a village near Bordeaux. Early in her art career she went to Paris and entered the Académie Julien. There she was under the training of Bouguereau and Robert-Fleury, men who taught fundamentals. On this foundation she is building an art peculiar to herself. Like Rosa Bonheur, Mlle. Dufau has had the honour of being decorated with the Legion of Honour by the French government—the second woman in France.

As early as 1901 she began experimental out-of-doors painting of the nude in which she developed an original and penetrating view point. Her sensitive perception of the quality of light on living flesh and her skill in catching in paint the varying reflections has given her pictures of the nude a high standard of excellence.

After Edmond Rostand (1868-1918) built his villa near Cambo, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, several French artists were requested to decorate the walls and among these artists was Mlle. Dufau. In this mural work her exquisite treatment of flesh is lovely in its decorative quality.

On the stairway are her three oval panels, very pleasing in space filling and subjects. The exquisite colour notes of flesh and the feathery whites and gay tones in the "Parrots" (Fig. 212) are exceedingly gratifying. Rhythm and simplicity, in the "Peacocks" (Fig. 213), give the impression that the niche was made to fit the picture. Ease, comfort and content stamp each curve and line, and the luscious colour notes sing in perfect harmony. In Mlle. Dufau's own words we learn the secret of her success as an artist. She says: "An artist's work is only the expression of his personality and his life. I put into my pictures what I observe, my thoughts, my reading."

Mlle. Dufau during her recent visit to America, painted a number of portraits of people more or less in the public eye. Her portrait of "Mlle. Libert," exhibited in the Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 114), we regret to say was too hastily done to be entirely satisfactory. It is a daring study in red and shows a marked understanding of the personality of her sitter. Mlle. Libert is the daughter of M. Gaston E. Libert, the French Consul General to America.

When Henrietta Amiard Oberteuffer exhibited a collection of her paintings in the Arlington Gallery, New York City, in 1921, American artists



FIG. 214.—Mdlle. Libert. Mdlle. Dufau.



FIG. 215.—The Children. Oberteuffer. Courtesy of the Arlington Gallery, New York City.

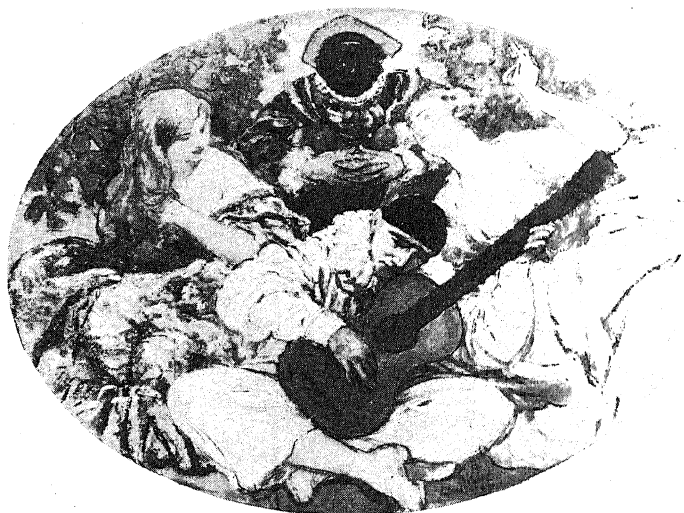


FIG. 216.—The Concert. Paul Laurens. Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

commended and the public was enthusiastic. Well might these two judges recognize this genius for she is one of the French painters to be remembered. Her work has the substantial elements of well trained preparation and on these she has built an art peculiar to herself. Each picture showed the individuality of the artist in its treatment and subject without the least touch of mannerism. In fact her approach to each is like that of a friend meeting her friends. Each one calls out a certain personality and only that personality could respond to that particular friend or picture.

The earnestness of the little girls in the painting of "The Children," Arlington Gallery (Fig. 215), is delicious in its genuineness. They are entirely unconscious of an audience. Who but a genius would have dared dress one of the children in black yet how perfectly and radiantly the black note dominates and distinguishes the picture.

Mme. Obertauffer was born in Havre sometime in the eighties of the nineteenth century. She went to Paris and studied under Jean Paul Laurens and Benjamin Constant, two men from whom she could draw a strong keynote around which to build a growing art. With such a foundation she could enter the arena of all kinds of isms and daintily take her way gathering and

rejecting, always judging with a critical understanding what would serve her best in her art. It is thus she stands side by side with the progressive, never accepting without proving each step as she advances.

P. Albert Laurens is the son of the artist Jean Paul Laurens (see page 226). That the younger man is striving to keep bright the honour of his father's profession is evident in "The Concert," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 216). The rhythm and swing of the composition is nicely balanced in the well filled space. Design and colour vie with each other in carrying the interest from point to point yet centring it in the music. The concert may be a burlesque but the picture has a decorative quality that sings with the music. M. Laurens is one of the well trained artists with an inherited artistic ability, who must give us an art commensurate with the needs of France. It must be something pure and joy-giving with enough of the progressive to grow and enough sanity to keep sane.

It is always an awkward position to be the child of famous parents especially if one wants to shine oneself. It is like living up to the reputation father gives one when beginning work with father's special friends. This is just the position of Bernard Boutet de Monvel (1881-).

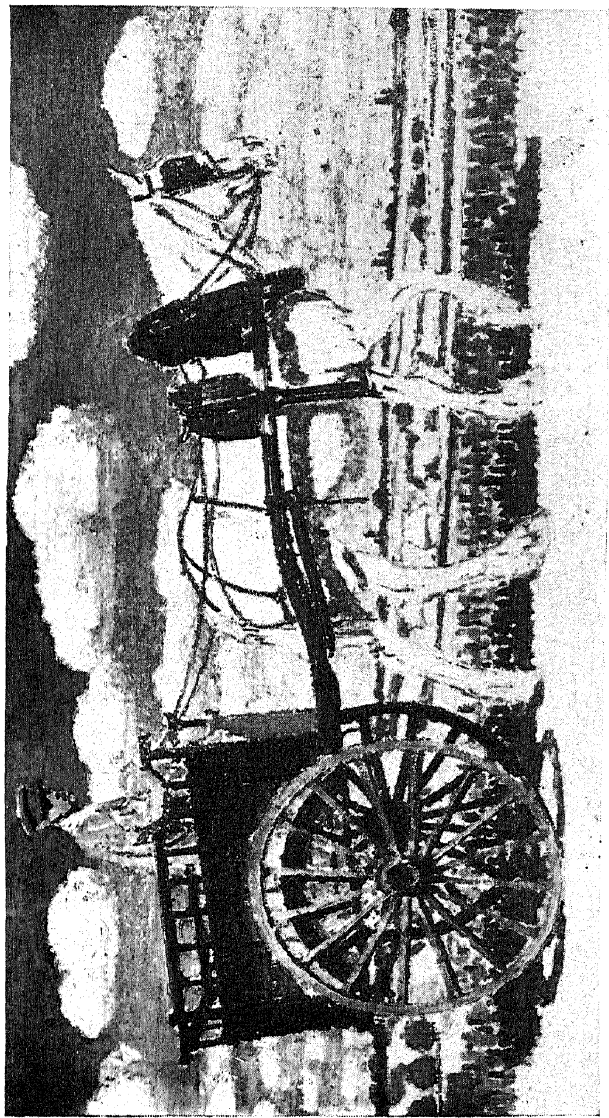


FIG. 217.—The Blue Cart. De Monvel. Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

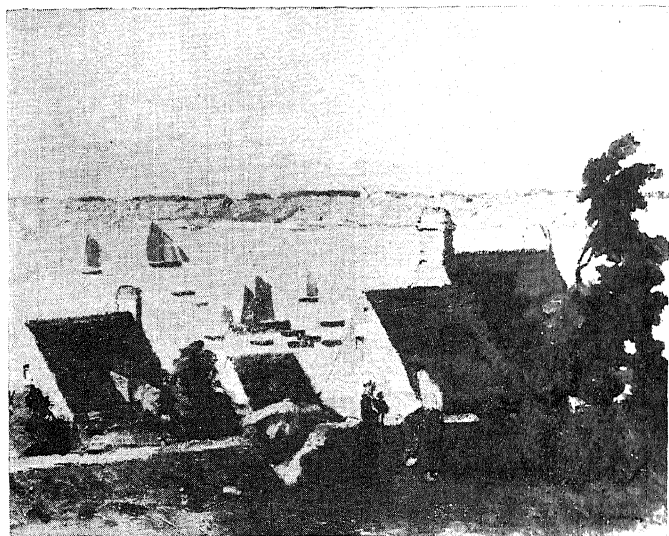


FIG. 218.—Evening in Brittany. Marchain. Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N. Y.

From the very beginning of his art career this favoured son of Maurice Boutet de Monvel (see page 257) was accepted by critic and layman. In fact so enthusiastic were art lovers over the coloured etchings that they were gathered up almost from the etching needle until today, when the artist is scarcely forty years old, they are rare and looked upon as art treasures. However, it is wise to pause and take breath—wise for both artist and public—too much popularity is confusing to producer and purchaser.

"The Blue Cart," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 217), is scarcely more than a poster and unfortunately does not represent M. de Monvel at his best. It does have a wholesome spirit of comradeship oozing out from "buddy" and his horse that awakens kindness toward all. There is fitness in the cart and horse and boy in that low-lying land. The clouds, too, move in harmony and the sky, gleefully blue, is not to be outdone by paint. Travel on boy! you and M. de Monvel together will work the better for your inspiration.

"Evening in Brittany," Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 218), is a picture that carries conviction in every line. Paul Marchain knew the low-lying coast of this inlet. He has seen the tiny row boats adrift and has watched the breeze fill the sails as the flying clouds scud away. He knew the water

would give no heed to surface ripples and the homes were safe. But oh, the tragedy those boats hold! The mother knows it and the father, though he yearns for the sea, lingers. The colour, rich in its primal notes, carries the hopes and fears of the Briton.

Brittany is the home of the thinking artist. Here he finds land and sky and sea set ready for the brush. He feels the pulsing of primeval forces and gains strength and confidence as he searches out causes. The sun in Brittany has no note of finality and Marchain with his strong sense of line and colour and composition grasps this natural phenomenon—every sunset requires scientific explanation—as unusual and worthy of big thought.

Marchain was born at Rochefort-sur-Mer, a maritime city north of Bordeaux. Over and over again he paints the sea and always with the vigorous emphasis of one who recognized elemental forces. Strong and fearless Marchain stands as one of the modern old masters in French art.

One of the very strong, sane leaders of French art today is Pierre Montézin. He was born in Paris, in 1874, and before the century closed began to be recognized as a man to be reckoned with in the art world. His subjects are mostly quiet



FIG. 219.—Autumn. Montézin. Courtesy of Mr. James K. Frazer, New York City.

unobtrusive country scenes where he not only grasps the colour principles of nature's own workshop but reveals something of her processes of growth and decay. An unerring judgment holds him to elementals but with a sympathetic tenderness that appeals at once to the public.

Two splendid examples of his work have found permanent homes in America. Through the kindness of Mr. James K. Fraser, New York City, the owner of "Autumn" (Fig. 219), we may enjoy in half tone a little of the glory of the original painting. Those swaying saplings at the water's edge shine like pure gold under the sun's good night caress. What at first seems confusion in the composition after a moment's quiet contemplation becomes a wonderfully worked design. Analysing the scene a little, look at the shore line, was ever anything more rhythmic! and the tall trunk of the second growth trees shaking loose their brilliantly dyed leaves, could any song be more limpid! the filmy atmosphere tantalizingly revealing and concealing each object, could any oriental pattern be more mysterious! and the bewitching colour, surely Montézin has at last discovered the secret of old stained glass!

The very young artists in France today—"legion" is their name—are facing a new era. Not all, no, not a fraction of them will be worthy

of the glorious past, yet each artist has the possibility of big things and big things are bound to come. Eternal youth and the true spirit of French art will build again the France we love and honour—God bless her.

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